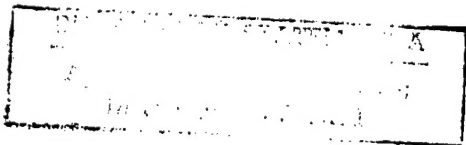




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DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE  
AIR UNIVERSITY  
**AIR FORCE INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY**

Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, Ohio

AFIT/GCM/LAL/98J-1

*SECURITY ASSISTANCE TO SOUTH KOREA: ASSESSMENT OF  
POLITICAL, MILITARY, AND ECONOMIC ISSUES  
FROM 1947 TO 1989*

THESIS

Myung Ryul Bae, B.S.  
Major, ROKA

AFIT/GCM/LAL/98J-1

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THESIS

Presented to the Faculty of the Graduate School of Logistics  
and Acquisition Management of the Air Force Institute of Technology

Air University

Air Education and Training Command

In Partial Fulfillment of the

Requirements for the Degree of

Master of Science in Logistics Management

Myung Ryul Bae, B.S.

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June 1998

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## **Acknowledgments**

I would like to thank Dr. Craig Brandt, my thesis advisor, for providing direction when I needed it and freedom always. I would like to thank my thesis reader, Maj Fossum, for her help and guidance. Finally, and most importantly, I would like to thank my wife Seolok, for her total support and understanding as she adjusted to life in the states.

Myung Ryul Bae

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**Abstract**

South Korea is one of the most important allies of the United States. Because of its location in East Asia between China, Japan, and Russia, South Korea is a strategically important partner of the United States. Since the Korean War, the United States and South Korea have tried to maintain the regional stability, and South Korea has played a significant role for the East Asian power balance between those countries. The relationship between the United States and South Korea changed through time from the Korean War to the rebuilding phase of South Korea's economy, and finally a progression towards a more independent South Korea capable of a larger portion of military self-defense. U.S. security assistance program has played a key role to the rebuilding process of South Korea. Security assistance has also been used to supplement economic and military enhancement in South Korea. South Korea is one of the best examples that demonstrate tangible U.S. support for nations whose defense was deemed vital to U.S. security.

***SECURITY ASSISTANCE TO SOUTH KOREA: ASSESSMENT OF POLITICAL,  
MILITARY, AND ECONOMIC ISSUES FROM 1947 TO 1989***

**I. Introduction**

**General Issue**

South Korea is one of the most important allies of the United States. Because of its location in East Asia between China, Japan, and Russia, South Korea is a strategically important partner of the United States. Since the Korean War, South Korea and the United States have tried to maintain the regional stability, and South Korea has been used by the United States in the East Asian power balance between those countries.

The relationship and the alliance between the United States and Korea were forged in crucible of a terrible war – the Korean War which ended in a stalemate, but a war which preserved the freedom of the people of South Korea. The relationship changed through time from the Korean War to the rebuilding phase of South Korea's economy, and finally a progression towards a more independent South Korea capable of a larger portion of military self-defense. The rebuilding process of South Korea and the power balance between South and North Korea were carried out largely by the United States and its various programs of security assistance.

Security assistance refers to the range of United States programs and other authorities for provision of defense assistance and economic support and the transfer or sales of defense items. The Department of Defense defines security assistance as follows:

Groups of programs authorized by the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, as amended, and the Arms Export Control Act (AECA) of 1976, as amended, and other related statutes by which the United States provides defense articles, military training, and other defense related services, by grant, loan, credit, or cash sales in furtherance of national policies and objectives. (DISAM, 1996: 43)

## **Statement of Justification**

Security assistance plays a key role to accomplish the United States foreign policy. Since the Korean War, the United States has provided security assistance to South Korea and has maintained close political and military relationships with South Korea.

South Korea is also one of the United States' closest allies and economic partners. South Korea currently has developed its economic strength dramatically. After three decades of powerful economic growth, South Korea has made it the 11th largest economy in the world, the 5th largest trade partner with the United States.

But South Korea still depends on the United States for security. And the United States still maintains 39,000 troops and spends the defense budgets to maintain those troops in South Korea for preventing the possibility of another invasion from the north. It is necessary to understand the facts that security assistance is essential for the United States to achieve its objectives of foreign policy.

## **Problem Statement**

Considering the contribution of the United States security assistance to South Korea in political, economic, and military issues, this thesis analyzes how the United States has influenced South Korea by providing security assistance from 1947 to 1989. This thesis will find the events and the facts such as South Korea's involvement in the Vietnam War, the intelligence ship U.S.S.

Pueblo incident in 1969 and human rights issues in 1970s, which affected the execution of United States security assistance to South Korea historically. It also finds the goals and objectives of the United States security assistance programs to South Korea.

### **Limitations and Assumptions**

The scope of the thesis was limited to unclassified material. It was assumed that the execution of United States security assistance policy and the intent of United States security assistance policy could come from the ascertained official records of the legislative review process, bills, laws, enactments, and other unofficial statements of policy.

### **Research Questions**

1. What political, economical and military issues have influenced the execution of the United States security assistance to South Korea?
2. What contribution has security assistance made to military strength and economic growth in South Korea?
3. What contribution has security assistance made to strategic military balance on the Korean peninsula and regional stability in East Asia?
4. What will be the future role of security assistance in United States-South Korea relations?

## **II. Methodology**

### **Research Objective**

The research objective is to study the United States foreign policy towards South Korea, analyze how security assistance has affected the United States foreign policy, and how the security assistance programs have evolved to support foreign policy. An understanding of the basic concept is necessary in order to assess the issues that affect security assistance.

This research will focus on historical foreign policy issues. Based on historical research, we can draw on past trends and historical lessons to anticipate future events. It is better to understand security assistance to make wiser future decisions.

### **Research Method**

This research will focus on assessing the political, economic, and military issues which influenced the historical execution of security assistance policy. According to Borg and Gall, historical research is "a systematic and objective location, evaluation, and synthesis of evidence in order to establish facts and draw conclusions concerning past events" (Borg, 1971:260). Moseley suggests that historians who cannot research all historical factors cannot make accurate conclusions of their findings. However, historians try to develop explanations by judging the relative importance of various factors on events by assessing historical events; the judgments might lead to conclusions but not a final answer (Moseley, 1981:38).

To accomplish research objectives, historical research is necessary. The use of this method involves collecting information related to research objectives. This information



normally consists of historical documents and archival data. Historical research also involves the process of collecting relevant historical data (SSRC, 1954:157-159).

Data collection plays a key role in the research process. The historical method involves collecting public record, literature, documents, reports, and any other medium that contributes relevant information (Dane, 1990:169). Collected data were divided into two categories of primary and secondary sources. Primary sources are original documents, eyewitness accounts, and public records. Secondary sources are studies such as historical accounts and interpretations or contemporary views (Mozden, 1964:15).

After completion of the data collection process, collected data are analyzed for accuracy, importance, and meaning. The data must first be examined to determine the historical meaning as intended by the author or documenting organization. Then the data should be examined to determine how it fits into the historical context of the period during which the data were produced (Reitzel, 1982:184-185). Internal and external criticism will be used for this analysis. External criticism, which focuses on determination of the origin and authenticity of the data source document, will be achieved by considering the author, when the document was written, and possible corruption of the data. Internal criticism, which focuses on the statements and the "true" meaning of the statements, will be achieved by comparing similar and opposing views from multiple sources and choosing the most probable explanation (Moseley, 1981: 39; SSRC, 1954: 80).

The methodology for this research will be an ex-post facto literature review. The subject matter will be categorized into eras based on significant political, economic, and military issues from the administration of each United States presidents. Significant issues will be defined as issues which appeared to affect security assistance policy. Examples of significant issues will be

the events or the facts such as legislative acts concerning security assistance, changes in national leadership, and global or regional events which affected the relationship between the United States and South Korea. Within each era, the qualitative data like Congressional legislation and stated national policy will be compared with quantitative data such as the actual amounts of grant aid, foreign military sales, gross national product and percent of gross national product spent on defense (Puvogel, 1995:2-2).

### **Data Sources**

Data for this research will be collected from local libraries and electronic databases such as Defense Technical Information Center (DTIC) and First Search. Data will be also collected from government periodicals, journals, newspapers, books, and magazines related to information on security assistance.

### **III. Literature Review**

#### **Introduction**

This chapter will provide background information on security assistance program. The concept of security assistance will be briefly explained. This explanation is necessary to understand security assistance cases which have influenced on the relationship between the United States and South Korea. The Defense Institute of Security Assistance Management (DISAM) formally categorizes security assistance into six programs.

#### **Foreign Military Sales (FMS)**

Foreign Military Sales (FMS) is a program through which the United States Government provides designated foreign countries with defense article, services, and training. The purchasing country is responsible for all costs associated with a sale. To purchase and supply equipment or supplies, the United States Government and the purchasing country have to reach an agreement called a Letter of Acceptance (LOA). Based on LOA, the United States Government has the authority to contract with United States industry for buying and the responsibility for delivering the article or service requested to the purchasing country. Foreign Military Construction Sales includes the sale of design and constructions service and follows the same procedures as FMS (DISAM, 1996: 47).

#### **The Foreign Military Financing Program (FMFP)**

The Foreign Military Financing Program (FMFP) is a “grants and loans” program appropriated by the United States Congress. The designated foreign country is able to purchase defense articles, services, and training through either FMS or Direct Commercial Sales (DSC)

under this program. The original purpose of this program was to give foreign government effective means of cash purchases (DISAM, 1996: 47).

### **Direct Commercial Sales (DCS) Licensed under the AECA**

Direct Commercial Sale is a sale in which United States industry can make a sale of defense articles or defense services directly to a foreign country under a Department of State-issued license without following FMS procedure. This transaction is controlled under the Office of Defense Trade Control in the Department of State and International Traffic in Arms Regulations (ITAR) (DISAM, 1996: 48).

### **The International Military Education and Training (IMET) Program**

The International Military Education and Training (IMET) Program is one of security assistance programs which provides training to designated foreign military and defense associated civilian personnel "on a grant basis." Training would be provided at United States military facilities or overseas. The IMET program is authorized by the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 (FAA), as amended (DISAM, 1996: 49).

### **The Economic Support Fund (ESF)**

The Economic Support Fund (ESF) is a program through which economic assistance is provided "on a grant basis," to designated foreign governments that are significant political or military interests for the United States. The funds may be used to finance imports of commodities, capital, or technical assistance in accordance with the terms of a bilateral agreement; counterpart funds thereby generated may be used as budgetary support. These funds

enable a recipient to devote more of its own resources to defense and security purposes than it otherwise could do without serious economic or political consequences (DISAM, 1996: 50).

### **Peacekeeping Operations (PKO)**

PKO are authorized by the Foreign Assistance Act. For the past several years, PKO provided funds for the Multinational Force and Observers (MFO) which implemented the 1979 Egyptian-Israeli peace treaty, and the United States contribution to the United Nations Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP). (DISAM, 1996: 50)

### **Summary**

According to DISAM, "Security assistance program has been and still remains an important instrument of U.S. foreign policy." This program is involved in "arms transfers and related services (DISAM, 1996: 33)." With respect to this meaning, security assistance program is an important part of keeping a relationship between the United States and South Korea. Security assistance program also contributes to enhance both countries economical and military interests.

According to the Congressional Presentation Document, security assistance has five primary objectives:

1. Increasing the ability of United States security partners to deter and defend against aggression, and to shoulder more of the common defense burden.
2. Helping to maintain strong and cohesive defense arrangements with friends and allies, and to secure access to important military facilities throughout the world.
3. Promoting regional stability by arms transfer controls on the volume and types of weaponry provided to security assistance recipients.
4. Strengthening the economies of countries with which the United States has a security relationship and, when necessary, helping those governments toward market oriented economic policies.

5. Fostering human rights, democratic values and institutions. (US DoS and US DoD, 1993: 4)

The three main interdependent aspects of security assistance are political, economic, and military. This research will focus on the influence of these aspects in the execution of United States security assistance to South Korea.

## **IV. Historical Background**

### **Introduction**

It is difficult to understand the modern history of South Korea without a comprehensive perception of its relation with the United States. It is also not exaggerated to say that the United States played a major role in the growth of South Korea as a modern country.

Over the half centuries, the United States and South Korea have kept a very close political and military relationship through which both countries have assisted to keep peace and stability on the Korean peninsula and in Northeast Asia as a whole. After the United States fought the Korean War as a major ally to South Korea, the United States and South Korea alliance has committed mutual obligations and security activities. The United States has since kept a military presence in South Korea (Pollack, 1995:1).

Some of the reasons the United States has sought to keep a relationship with South Korea are as follows:

The U.S. intervention in Korea underscored three primary strategic objectives that have since remained central to U.S. policy in Asia and the Pacific: (1) to prevent the domination of Northeast Asia by a hostile power or coalition of states; (2) to foster an environment in which practices and institutions supportive of U.S. values and interests could take root; and (3) to ensure that markets and resources remained accessible to U.S. economic involvement and development. (Pollack, 1995:12)

In case of South Korea, the foremost foreign policy concern of the successive government of South Korea since its establishment in 1948 has been South Korea's relationship with the United States. South Korea also has very important strategic interests in keeping a good relationship with the United States. These reasons are as follows:

Its (South Korea's) preeminent concerns were to achieve political viability, to uphold national sovereignty and national security, and to foster conditions that would contribute to longer-term economic development. These interests presupposed an ability

(in cooperation with the United States) to defeat renewed aggression from the North, to realize national reconstruction and development, and to achieve internal stability.  
(Pollack, 1995:12)

Since the Korean War, South Korea's economic condition has changed dramatically.

South Korea's gross national product, which is one of the highest annual average growth rates in the world, increased at an average annual rate of almost ten-percent from the mid-1960s to 1973. Despite oil shocks and worldwide economic recession, the GNP rose eight percent a year from 1973 to the mid-1980s. This stable economic development changed the structure of the South Korean economy from "that of a typical developing country to that of a moderately industrialized nation (Park, Eul Yong, 1985:114).

In fact, the relationship between the United States and South Korea has been undergoing changes in recent years. South Korea is showing a greater degree of willingness to attempt self-reliance, not only in the economic and political arenas but also in national defense. The United States is expressing reluctance to act like a full-fledged protector of South Korea. However, the Korean peninsula still remains divided, with highly antagonistic relations between South and North. After the collapse of the Soviet Union, the uncertainties in Northeast Asia also remain substantial and provide the United States and South Korea with clear incentives to sustain close political, economic, and security ties.

### **Truman Era (1945-1953)**

Korea, prior to the end of World War II, was virtually an unknown country to the United States. During World War II, on 26 November 1943, the United States, China and Great Britain made the Cairo Declaration in an attempt to reorganize the world after World War II. The Declaration mentioned that Korea would become independent after the surrender of Japan. At



that time, the Soviet Union did not participate in war on Japan. However, the Soviet Union subsequently agreed to the concept of the Cairo Declaration at the same time the Soviet Union entered into war on Japan on 8 August 1945 (White, 1990:19).

As the collapse of Japan became imminent, the United States became concerned about the Korea situation. On 11 August 1945, the decision to divide Korea into two military occupation zones was made by the Pentagon in Washington to facilitate the surrender of Japanese in Korea. On 13 August 1945, the plan that the Soviet Union could occupy the northern part of Korea above the 38th parallel to disarm the Japanese forces was proposed by President Roosevelt and then the Soviet Union accepted it (White, 1990:19). This proposal would become the origin of division of Korea. At that time, President Roosevelt and his administration considered that Korea was not strategically important (Cho, Soon Sung, 1982:66).

After the Japanese surrender of August 15, 1945, the division of Korea appeared to become real. On 26 August 1945, the Soviet Union occupied the northern part of Korea without hesitation. After the formal surrender of Japanese on the battleship Missouri in Tokyo on 2 September 1945, the U.S. XXIV Corps advance troops also landed in Seoul to accept the Japanese surrender on 4 September and the 7th Infantry Division at Incheon on 8 September. On 9 September 1945, the Japanese below the 38th parallel formally surrendered. The main goal of the XXIV Corps in Korea was to transfer the Japanese rule of southern part of Korea to a Korean government. While pursuing this goal, MG Arnold, Commanding General, 7th Infantry Division was designated as the Military Governor of South Korea on 12 September 1945. At the end of October, 1945, a total number of 77,000 American troops were deployed in South Korea and the process of Japanese surrender went well (White, 1990:20).

In Moscow in December 1945, during an allied foreign ministers conference, an agreement was made to place Korea under a four-power trusteeship for a period of up to five years. This effort did not go as well as the occupation and repatriation, and failing to reach consensus, the effort was abandoned in May of 1946. After that, on the basis of the Moscow Conference, the Joint American-Soviet Commission was organized. The Joint Conference was held two times from March 20, 1946 to May 6, 1946 and from May 21, 1947 to October 18, 1947. During the debates, numerous proposals and counter-proposals were made by the two delegations, the United States and the Soviet Union, but no substantial progress was made. The official reason of the Conference failure was known of differences of interpretation over what were "democratic social groups or parties" and "what was the definition of 'freedom of speech.'" However, the fundamental reason for the failure was "the clash of opposing powers" (Cho, Soon Sung, 1982:67-68). Actually nothing was accomplished toward unifying Korea under a single government of its own choice in the two years from 1945 to 1947, and the antagonism between the two occupying powers, the United States and the Soviet Union, increased markedly. North and South of the 38th parallel subsequently resulted in the development of two regimes hostile to each other.

The origin of government in South Korea was the failure of the Joint Conference between the United States and the Soviet Union. The deadlock of negotiations ultimately meant that Korea was to divide into two heterogeneous political entities along the 38th parallel. The United States did not want to take the responsibility of Korea's division, and then it decided to place all problems relevant to Korea's independence under the General Assembly of the United Nations. The United Nations created a Temporary Commission on Korea in November of 1947 which again called for a return to the principles of agreement of the Moscow Conference and to oversee

elections in Korea. However, because the Commission failed to gain admittance to oversee elections in northern sector, only elections were held in South Korea. At the 1948 session of the Assembly, the United Nations approved the work of the Commission and recognized the Republic of Korea established in the south (Koo, Youngnok, 1985:5). The newly elected representatives in South Korea adopted a constitution and Rhee, Syngman was elected as the first president of South Korea on 15 July 1948.

During the Truman era, the United States offered “unrequited” economic aid which kept South Korea sustained. From 1945 to 1948, the U.S. first economic aid program and Government Appropriations for Relief in Occupied Areas (GARIOA) aid program were carried out by the United States Army Military Government in Korea (USAMGIK). GARIOA program had three objectives: “(1) Prevention of starvation and disease, (2) Increasing farm output, and (3) Supplementing the shortage of consumer goods.” The amount of this program was up to \$500 million. At the end of 1948, the economic aid agreement which was similar to Economic Cooperation Administration (ECA) between the United States and South Korea was signed. This program focused on “economic recovery and stabilization” in South Korea and reached \$109 million. During the Korean War, this program focused on relief. Other economic programs such as Civil Relief in Korea (CRIK) and United Nations Korean Reconstruction Agency (UNKRA) were implemented under the leading of the United States (Kim, Ki-Hoon, 1982:326-328).

U.S. policy of economic assistance to South Korea originated from the basis of “the economic theory of democracy.” This theory says that “democracy is viable under economic growth and prosperity.” President Truman justified his request to Congress for economic aid to South Korea based on this theory. He emphasized “the promotion of democracy as the essential American foreign policy” as follows:

Korea has become a testing ground in which the validity and practical value of the ideals and principles of democracy which the Republic is putting into practice are being matched against the practices of communism which has been imposed upon the people of North Korea. The survival and progress of the Republic toward a self-supporting, stable economy will have an immense and far reaching influence on the people of Asia. Such progress by the young Republic will encourage the people of southern and southeastern Asia and the island of the Pacific to resist and reject the communist propaganda with which they are besieged. Moreover, the Korean Republic, by demonstrating the success and tenacity of democracy in resisting communism, will stand as a beacon to the people of northern Asia in resisting the control of the communist forces which have overrun them. (Pae, Sung Moon, 1991:457)

Before the Korean War, however, U.S. military aid to South Korea was not significant in comparison with economic assistance. This situation reflected that the United States was not interested in Korea and Korea had little military value. In September 1948, the government of South and North Korea began working, United States and Soviet Union troops started to withdraw from South Korea and North Korea. While Soviet Union left "an indigenous military forces" such as "T-34 Russian tanks," "light and heavy artillery," and "powerful Russian-built 120mm howitzers" in North Korea, the United States left only enough equipment to arm just 50,000 police forces: "100,000 small arms, 51 million rounds of ammo, transport (trucks and jeeps) for 40,000 men, mortars, antitank bazookas, and guns" (Blair, 1987:44). After Truman's inauguration in 1949, President Rhee's request for tanks, mobile artillery and aircraft was denied because the United States worried that he might invade North Korea (Blair, 1987:44). Then the United States rapidly decided to withdraw its troops from South Korea by June 1949 with leaving only 500, the U.S. Military Advisory Groups to the Republic of Korea (K MAG). After withdrawing its troops from South Korea, the United States wanted to pay attention to maintain law and order and assist the recovery in Japan (White, 1990: 22, 25).

There were several reasons why the United States did not want to support South Korea to enhance South Korean Forces. First, the U.S. policy on enhancing South Korean forces was

consistent with the U.S. global policy. After World War II, the United States had decided to reduce military personnel dramatically because the United States had \$250 billion national debt due to World War II. Downsizing the military was a President Truman's major objective (White, 1990: 22). However, its policy was very different from the policy implemented in Europe. The purpose of the U.S. policy in Asia focused on withdrawing American troops from the mainland of Asia (Lyons, 1961: 13). Second, the United States feared the South Korea's military strength would become strong enough to invade North Korea. President Rhee, Syngman often threatened that if he had sufficient military power, he would try to reunify Korea. Therefore, the United States did not want South Korea to have sufficient military power to fight North Korea (Bandow, 1996: 20). Finally, the United States military concluded that Korea was not strategically important for the United States' interests. Then the main objective of the United States was to liquidate the responsibility in Korea as soon as possible and transfer its burden to the United Nations. The leaders of the United States regarded the Korean problem as an "unhappy burden" and "a needless liability to free world." In 1947, Secretary of War Patterson insisted that "the occupation of South Korea was a risky strain on the Army and urged that the troops be withdrawn as soon as possible (Lyons, 1961: 13)." The United States embarrassments on the Korean policy were also expressed by Acheson's statement in January 12, 1950. In the National Press Club, he made a speech as follows:

This defense perimeter runs along to Japan and then goes to the Ryukyus. We hold important defensive positions in the Ryukyu Islands (including Okinawa) and these we will continue to hold... (Collins, 1969:30)

This meant that South Korea was not included in the American strategic defense perimeter in the Far East and the United States quietly agreed that Korea was not in the boundary

of its influences. This implication was again confirmed by Senator Connally, Chairman of the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations. When the press asked him, he responded that Korea was not essential part of America's defense strategy. Even the Pentagon ignored the importance of Korea and ordered to reduce the U.S. Military Advisory Group to the Republic of Korea (KMAG) from 500 to 250 while the North Korean Forces had grown to attack South Korea later (White, 1990: 22-23).

From 1945 to 1950, subsequent development in the respective occupation zones differed widely. The Soviet Union was relatively systematic in creating a communist satellite state, using a preconceived formula for Sovietization, while the United States advocacy of self-determination was more an ideal than a concrete program. According to Lyons, during this period, the United State had implemented economic aid to South Korea with two policy frameworks, "positive and negative aspects" from 1945 to 1950. With respect to the positive aspect, the United States was trying to implement "the pledge of the Cairo Declaration of 1943 that Korea would become free and independent." In negative aspect, the United States was trying to "avert Communist domination of South Korea." After 1947, although the United States expressed that its main goal was to help Korea to be independent, it had implemented its policy focusing on preventing the spread of communism below the 38th parallel (Lyons, 1961: 12).

However, United States' support to strengthen South Korean troops to defend itself was not enough. At the beginning of the Korea War, the South Korean army was only about one hundred thousand men. Although the United States sent political, military, and other representatives and created, trained and equipped the South Korean military forces after the establishment of South Korean government, South Korea's military forces were totally

unprepared and were not enough to defend from the North Korean attack by its own military power (Yim, Yong Soon, 1982:305-306).

On June 25, 1950, North Korea crossed the 38th parallel and then attacked South Korea. Although the United States had little national interests in Korea at that time, President Truman responded very quickly and decided to commit the United States troops to defend South Korea. He also designated General MacArthur as the Commander in Chief Far East(CINCFE) and ordered him to command the United Nations and United States Forces (White, 1990: 26).

The United States' view toward Korea was changed drastically with the outbreak of the Korean War. Most Americans believed that North Korea could not attack South Korea by itself without the Soviet Union's assistance and regarded a war as "general plan for expansion" and "a prelude to general war." This American's perception forced the United States to change its view of Korea's strategic value in Northeast Asia. South Korea had suddenly become a vitally important area for the United States (Yim, Yong Soon, 1982:286). Therefore, South Korea should be supported, not because the Soviet Union's control of South Korea would directly damage American's vital interests, but because a failure to cope with the Soviet Union's challenge would fatally damage America's prestige and lead to a collapse of the free world's will to resist Communist aggression in places that really counted.

The Korean War also forced the United States to make a dramatic change in United States policy toward to Korea. The United States realized that Korea would be a partner of American containment strategy and Korea had a strategically important position not only to block the communist but also to protect Japan from communist. Therefore, the Korean War became a landmark of U.S. containment strategy with respect to the security of Europe (Yim, Yong Soon,

1982:286-287). In this point of view, President Truman addressed the importance of the South Korean security as follows:

Communism was acting in Korea just as Hitler, Mussolini and the Japanese had acted ten, fifteen, and twenty years earlier. I felt certain that if South Korea was allowed to fail Communist leaders would be emboldened to override nations closer to our own shores. If the Communists were permitted to force their way into the Republic of Korea without opposition from the free world, no small nation would have the courage to resist threats and aggression by stronger Communist neighbors. If this was allowed to go unchallenged it would mean a third world war, just as similar incidents had brought on the second world war. (Yim, Yong Soon, 1982:286)

In 1952, U.S. defense budget reached \$50 billion. The United States increased the armed forces from 1.4 million in 1950 to 3.6 million in 1952. However, the United States mainly enhanced the armed forces in Europe (Kaufman, 1985:553). The United States was more concerned about Europe and feared that communist would start World War III. The North Korean attack was also regarded as a part of distracting U.S. attention from Europe. Due to this reason the war was limited (White, 1990:33).

While the Korean War continued, several historical events that impacted on the South Korea security took place. The United States misjudged China's warning that China would become involved in Korea if U.S. forces crossed the 38th parallel. This incident made a conflict between President Truman and General MacArthur. Then controversy over "limited warfare vs. general warfare" caused President Truman to recall General MacArthur in April of 1951. As the war went deeper, the increasing number of American casualty figures made the United States search for a settlement to the conflict. On June 23, 1951, Jacob Malik, the Soviet representative to UN Security Council referred that negotiations on the Korean armistice might be possible. On June 30, General Ridgway responded with suggesting that cease-fire talks could be started. However, this proposal was strongly opposed by President Rhee, Syngman. President Rhee did



not want to end the war under the condition of divided nation. He requested several demands under the condition of acceptance for an armistice and threatened that if the United States did not accept his demands, it should allow South Korea to fight on alone. Several demands included "the promise of US-ROK security pact," "loan of \$200,000,000," and "aid in expanding the ROK Army (Cho, Soon Sung, 1982:74)." Eventually, the United States had to send Secretary of State Dulles and Assistant Secretary of State Walter Robertson to South Korea to persuade President Rhee to accept the armistice and refrain from obstructing it. Finally he abandoned his attempt to unify Korea and agreed to accept an armistice. The United States responded to implement its promise in return for President Rhee's abandonment of his attempt to unify Korea (Cho, Soon Sung, 1982:74).

After two years of negotiation and bloody positional warfare, an armistice was declared on July 27, 1953, which has remained in effect ever since. The war has never officially ended.

During the war, the United States committed large resources to go to war against the communists. The war forced the United States not only to provide large amounts of military materials but to spend U.S. defense budgets to support South Korea. The United States suffered 33,000 battle deaths and 103,000 wounded and spent \$50 billion directly (Pae, Sung Moon, 1991:456).

### **Eisenhower Era (1953- 1961)**

As President Eisenhower started his term in 1953, he changed the means of Truman's foreign policy while preserving its main goals because he believed that the United States economy could no longer tolerate the defense budgets required by Truman's foreign policy. He also believed that the United States should possess a moral obligation to employ its power in

order to contain international communism, strengthen the economic, political, and ethical bonds within the free world, and protect American political and economic institutions from the chaos of international instability (Goldstein, 1993:28).

In November 1953, after the Korean armistice was signed, President Eisenhower introduced the New Look, which promised to reduce the military budget by taking advantage of United States atomic and air superiority. Along with New Look, a massive retaliation strategy was developed to emphasize strategic air power utilizing nuclear bombs. Eisenhower was convinced that the threat of massive retaliation might be an effective means for suppressing communist aggression in areas where the United States experienced painful conventional inferiority. Actually, massive retaliation strategy seemed to provide a sound defense against communist expansionism, while expending the least amount of money on defense (Goldstein, 1993:28-30).

During the 1950s, the United States also attempted to build an elaborate network of alliance and bilateral security agreements with the countries around the Soviet Union. The Eisenhower administration recognized that New Look, along with massive retaliation strategy, cut back the troops needed for limited conflict. Thus, the United States needed the conventional troops to fill the gap caused by the new strategy and the alliances which "mainly served as a tripwire to activate a nuclear response," if the communist attacked its allies (Goldstein, 1993:31). The buildup of such a strategy around the Soviet Union and Communist boundary was implemented with mutual military agreement, which put the primary responsibility for conventional defense in indigenous hands (Goldstein, 1993:31,34).

In context of this point, the Mutual Defense Treaty between the United States and South Korea, signed on August 1953 and effective on 17 November 1954, was a part of this strategy.

However, this treaty dealt with a dramatic reversal in American policy toward South Korea and the enhancement on security ties between two countries. It overturned the United States' ambiguity regarding the strategic importance of the Korean peninsula and formalized the bonds established during the Korean War. The Mutual Defense Treaty was also intended to reassure the South Korean government and made a clear signal of United States' resolution to defend South Korea against any future aggression. The treaty's provisions were as follows:

The ROK granted the U.S. the right to dispose U.S. land, air and naval forces in and around the Republic of Korea as determined by mutual agreement. The ROK agreed to keep its forces under operational control of the United Nations as long as the United Nations was responsible for the defense of Korea. The United States agreed to an extensive program of economic and military assistance for the Republic of Korea. And the United States reaffirmed its intention to employ its military power against an aggressor in the event of an unprovoked attack on the Republic of Korea. In an agreed minute to the Treaty, the Republic of Korea agreed to cooperate with the United States in its efforts to reunify the Korean Peninsula. In short, the United States took nearly full responsibility for the security and economic recovery of the Republic of Korea until reunification of the two Koreas could take place. (White, 1990:34)

When the Mutual Defense Treaty was signed, South Korea had several military and political roles to implement U.S. strategy as well. First, the United States would show its intention to defend the Far East to the Soviet Union and China through the Mutual Defense agreement with South Korea, Japan and Taiwan. Second, if South Korea was under attack from the communists, South Korea could serve as "a first-level sensory organization" to judge the communist intention of whether they really started a war or not (Yim, Yong Soon, 1982:289). Third, the United States regarded South Korea as a buffer zone for delaying or distracting the Soviet Union's attention if Europe was under attack. Fourth, the United States needed the South Korean military to fill the gap caused by reduction in American forces in the Far East (Yim, Yong Soon, 1982:289-290).

As signing the Mutual Defense Treaty, the United States began to regard South Korea as a frontier of the containment strategy, suppressing the Communist expansionism in the Korean peninsula, and protecting Japan from the Communist threat. The United States provided huge arms transfers to South Korea. This huge military aid program was aimed at opposing direct North Korean attack and Communist such as China and the Soviet Union (Yim, Yong Soon, 1982:306-307).

According to the armistice agreements, there were several issues that both sides should resolve as follows:

(1) a demilitarized zone (the DMZ) extending two kilometers on either side of a demarcation line corresponding roughly to the battlefield near the 38th parallel; (2) arrangements for a cease-fire; (3) mutual withdrawal of forces from designated coastal islands and waters off Korea; (4) cessation of introduction into Korea of military reinforcements; ... (6) the convening within three months of a political conference of representatives of both sides to negotiate the withdrawal of foreign forces from Korea and the peaceful settlement of the Korean question. (Buss, 1982:66)

At the end of the Korean War, there were 932,000 troops in South Korea, 302,000 being from the United States. On 26 December 1953, President Eisenhower announced that the U.S. divisions would withdraw from South Korea. In 1954, the 45th and 40th infantry division withdrew. In spite of South Korea's objection, four more U.S. combat division withdrawals took place between 1954 and 1955. By mid 1955, two U.S. infantry divisions, the 24th and the 7th infantry division, and support troops were all that remained in South Korea with small Turkish and Thai elements (White, 1990:35).

However, the United States did not neglect to strengthen the South Korea military capability, while the U.S. forces withdrew from South Korea. The United States felt that the Soviet Union and China continued to be a threat to South Korea and decided to support the South

Korean military reinforcement. According to the armistice agreements, reinforcing the South and North Korean military and supplying combat equipment into Korea were prohibited. Practically, however, this provision was not meaningful (Buss, 1982:70-71). In July of 1954, President Rhee, Syngman went to Washington asking for more aid. After the long talks, the United States promised to pay South Korea to increase its military by an additional 320,000 men under the condition that South Korea purchased aid materials from a former enemy, Japan, and the United States control the South Korean forces operation. Therefore, South Korea could increase its forces up to a total 720,000 man, which included a 661,000-man army, a 16,000-man navy, 27,000 marines and a 16,000-man air force (Bix, 1974:203).

On June 21, 1957, the United States finally announced that the United States would not follow sub-paragraph 13d of the armistice agreement, which prohibited reinforcing the South and North Korean military and supplying combat equipment into the Korean peninsula. Soon after the announcement of the abrogation of sub-paragraph 13d, the United States moved its latest model jet fighters and nuclear weapons to South Korea. In 1958, the United States deployed Honest John missiles, atomic artillery and a "Pentomic" division in South Korea. On July 1, 1957, the United States dismissed Far East Army headquarters in Tokyo and ordered to join UN command headquarters in Tokyo to the U.S. Eighth Army command in Seoul. At the same time, the United States organized a new Pacific command in Hawaii and forced Japan to play a more active role in South Korea and Southeast Asia (Bix, 1974:203-205).

During the Eisenhower era, the South Korean military became large enough to match North Korea's. The United States became concerned about how to control the enhanced South Korean Army because the United States was worried about President Rhee's unexpected action to North Korea. Therefore, two remaining infantry divisions and a U.S. military Advisory Group

(KMAG) started to control the South Korean military by providing as much gasoline and ammunition as was needed, while they kept advising and training the South Korean forces. During this period, the United States influenced not only on all levels of the South Korean military system, "from oil and ammunition levels to the annual size of the military budget," but also on "the ideology, training methods and organizational structure of the South Korean military" (Bix, 1982:203). The United States played an important role by providing military strength and confidence to South Korea and contributing to confine further communist adventure.

With respect to the economic situation in South Korea, when the armistice was signed, the Korean War largely devastated South Korea. The war destroyed half of the nation's manufacturing capacity and killed a million people. At the end of the war, per capita income was just \$87. The United States realized that the American and South Korean military control structure would not be meaningful without an economic defense support program through which to channel a large amount of U.S. assistance.

Since the war, South Korea focused on reconstruction and economic stabilization, besides the defense matters. At that time, the main difficulties that faced South Korea were inflation and capital formation. Annual inflation rate was more than 30 percent. To accomplish the reconstruction and stabilization on South Korea economy, large amounts of foreign aid, mainly sponsored by the United States, were implemented (Park, Eul Yong, 1985:109).

The economic aid program focused on "supplementing domestic savings for capital formation," easing on "unfavorable balance of payments," and reducing "inflationary pressure" (Kim, Ki-Hoon, 1982:328). During the 1953-1961 period, the United States provided about \$2.5 billion aid to South Korea. The amount of total foreign aid reached 4.4 percent of South Korea's

GNP in 1954 and increased up to 10.9 percent in 1956. The United States also provided 95 percent of total foreign aid which was equal to 8 percent of South Korea's GNP, 77 percent of capital assets and approximately 70 percent of total imports. However, after 1957, foreign aid started to decrease and this negatively influenced on the South Korean economy (Kim, Ki-Hoon, 1982:328).

### **Kennedy Era (1961- 1963)**

From 1960 to 1961, there occurred a dramatic political change that influenced the South Korean security and economy. On April 19, 1960, student demonstrations broke out due to President Rhee's fraudulent election. President Rhee mobilized the police force to put down the demonstration and in the process 142 students were killed. That incident forced President Rhee to announce his decision to resign on April 26, 1960. When the twelve years of the Rhee government ended, there was no administration to fill its place. Ho, Chong, who was appointed foreign minister, was given the task of forming an interim government until a new election could be held. On July 1960, the constitution of the Second Republic, written so as not to give any one individual dictatorial powers, was adopted. Chang, Myon was designated as a Prime Minister to handle the unstable South Korean situation. However, the Chang government's ruling ability was not enough to control and stabilize a wild spread of turmoil in South Korea. To make matters worse, the North Korean government took advantage of the internal disorder and stepped up their subversive activities against the South. Many people, including military officers, became concerned about this situation. On May 16, 1961, the military coup took place under the lead of two-star general, Park, Chung Hee (Eckert, 1990: 352-359).

The first U.S. response to the military coup was that the United States did not support a military revolutionary group in South Korea and demanded the junta return political powers in South Korea to civilian control. At that time, the United States was concerned that this military coup would become a starting point of military officers' involvement in "civilian affairs" and suspected General Park's political ideology because he had been connected with "a communist-inspired putsch" (Choi, Chong-ki, 1982:102). On May 18, 1961, Chang, Myon and his cabinet announced their resignation. On May 24, as new U.S. ambassador Samuel D. Berger arrived in South Korea, the United States changed its view of the military government. The talks between Chairman Park and President Kennedy confirmed that the United States continued to support South Korea and keep a good relationship between the two countries. Although the military coup was approved, the United States did not stop trying to persuade Chairman Park to return the military government to "civil rule" and hold a general election. When General Park announced the extension of military rule for four more years, the United States issued a strong protest and demanded that stable constitutional rule be restored in South Korea. On October 15, 1963, a presidential election was held and Park, Chung Hee won over former President Yoon, Po Sun by a small amount of votes (Choi, Chong-ki, 1982:100-104).

After the successful military coup, Park claimed that he took the power to save the nation from corruption, chaos, and hunger and made sure that the South Korean forces continued to contribute to U.S. interests. He also declared anticommunism to be the primary national credo (Bix, 1985:207).

After the establishment of new government, led by Park in South Korea, the attempts to normalize diplomatic relations between the two countries, South Korea and Japan, were made by the United States. As the defense treaty negotiation between North Korea and the Soviet Union



and China started in the middle of 1961, the United States hurried to mediate between South Korea and Japan for normalizing the relationship. The United States felt that diplomatic normalization between the two countries was essential for the security and peace of East Asia. The United States also wanted Japan to share U.S. defense and economic duty for South Korea's development program. In June 1961, the Task Force Report for the Nation Security Council addressed this issue as follows:

The U.S. planning for Korea and the ways in which economic and political differences between Korea and Japan can be bridged, despite the recent changes of government. It should be understood that while the U.S. will not participate actively in negotiations, it should be prepared to act as a catalyst in seeking a settlement. The Prime Minister should be encouraged to continue efforts recently begun to develop Japanese traded with Korea, and to provide economic assistance for Korean development coordinated with American programs... (The U.S. should also urge the SCNR (Supreme Council for National Reconstruction in South Korea) to be responsive to Japanese overtures.). (Lee, Chae-jin, 1982:29)

The United States encouraged the two countries to normalize their diplomatic and economic relations. In June 1961, President Kennedy emphasized the importance of the normalization of the two countries when he met Japanese Prime Minister Ikeda Hayato. During the same month, in a meeting with Park, he also promised to offer U.S. assistance to the two countries' negotiations. Despite the political controversy over this issue in the two countries, both countries reached an agreement in 1965, which included \$200 million in public loans, \$300 million in free grants and at least \$300 million in commercial credits over a ten-year period beginning in 1966 to South Korea (Lee, Chae-jin, 28-30). Although diplomatic normalization with Japan helped South Korea to reduce "economic dependence" on the United States, South Korea's security was still dependent on the United States (Han, Sung-Joo, 1985:150).

At the beginning of the Kennedy administration, one of the most dramatic changes in military strategy was a shift from massive retaliation to flexible response. The Kennedy administration realized that massive retaliation could not respond to small local communist aggressions such as Korea, Hungary, Vietnam and Laos. President Kennedy believed that massive retaliation was meaningless for preventing communist aggression without defeating such a small local aggression. He believed that flexible response would be more effective way to meet communist aggression at whatever level of invasion occurred, along with massive retaliation. Flexible response primarily focused on two parts, counter-insurgency and conventional forces, which demanded more military resources. Kennedy's new policy to deal with the Soviet Union, flexible response, had its drawback as well. Flexible response demanded much larger defense budgets due to its increased emphasis on conventional forces, while maintaining nuclear forces (Goldstein, 1993:72-76). However, this flexible response strategy was not carried out fully until Kennedy's assassination in 1963 (Kaufman, 1985:557).

In 1961, the Foreign Assistance Act permitted the President of the United States to sell its defense articles and services to alliances. Also, the Foreign Assistance Act of 1962 suggested that the United States would gradually substitute military sales for military grants (Puvogel, 1995:4-19). Due to those reasons, the circumstance of military assistance program was changed dramatically. The large amounts of grant aid were replaced by increasing arms sales under the FMS procedure. (DISAM, 1996:21). Actually, U.S. military aid to South Korea reduced from \$200 million in 1961 to \$124 million in 1964 (Yim, Yong Soon, 1982:308).

In addition to this reason, "a gradual change in the nature of U.S. perception of threat" was one of the particular reasons the United States reduced military aid to South Korea. The United States began to realize that the threat would come not only from "external aggression,"

like the Soviet Union but also from “insurgency and internal aggression (Levin, 1981:43).” This perception caused the United States to compete with the Soviet Union for influence in the third World. Although the United States maintained the basic commitment to the South Korean security, this perception made the United States concentrate more on the Third World and had little impact on U.S. policy toward South Korea (Levin, 1981:43-44).

There were also several reasons for the decline of the military aid. First, the threat from North Korea was reduced because of “various overtures” from North Korea and reduction in Soviet Union’s arms transfer to North Korea. Second, the South Korean forces were fully equipped by earlier U.S. military assistance. Third, flexible response strategy, which emphasized the importance of conventional forces, did not operate fully in the early 1960s (Yim, Yong Soon, 1982:308). However, this change did not affect overall South Korea’s military or economic development (Levin, 1981:44).

### **Johnson Era (1963- 1969)**

After the assassination of President Kennedy, President Johnson’s first concern as president was to show an image of continuity and political stability in order to ease uncertainties at home and abroad. To this end, he quickly announced that his administration would continue to follow the policies of his predecessor and he kept Kennedy’s senior national security advisors in place. During President Johnson’s administration, however, President Johnson’s major concern was Vietnam issue (Goldstein, 1993:97).

When President Johnson succeeded Kennedy, 16,000 U.S. military advisers were stationed in South Vietnam without participating in a long period local combat. The United States also provided a large amount of military and economic aid to South Vietnam. President

Johnson regarded Vietnam as a very important place to overcome the communist attempt to expand their territory in South East Asia. President Johnson referred his mind on this issue as follows:

Hanoi was not alone in its policy of aggression ... We had to be concerned not only about Vietnam but about the entire region... It became increasingly clear that Ho Chi Minh's military campaign against South Vietnam was part of a large, much more ambitious strategy being conducted by the Communists. (Goldstein, 1993:104)

For this reason, in July, 1964, U.S. military advisors were increased up to 21,000 and one month later, President Johnson sent more military advisors to South Vietnam. In August 1964, an incident occurred that was to force the United States deeper into the Vietnam War. A North Vietnam patrol boat attacked two U.S. destroyers in the Gulf of Tonkin. To deal with this incident, Congress passed the Tonkin Gulf Resolution with the House 416-0 and the Senate 88-2, which declared retaliatory air attacks against North Vietnamese naval facilities. This was recorded as a first direct U.S. attack on North Vietnamese territory. Although the United States did not declare war against North Vietnam officially, the Tonkin Gulf Resolution was regarded as "the functional equivalent of a war declaration" (Goldstein, 1993:106). Kennedy's alteration of U.S. military doctrine from massive retaliation to flexible response made possible that the United States could involve in the Vietnam War actively. The flexible response concept was required to improve the U.S. force's ability to meet the counter-insurgency and the jungle combat (Goldstein, 1993:105).

As the war intensified in 1965, the United States sent more American troops to Vietnam to support South Vietnam forces. In June, the same year, American troops were allowed to search and destroy Viet Cong troops beyond the boundary of American installations. By the end of 1968, the total American forces reached 525,000 (Goldstein, 1993:106-107).

In 1964, during the presidential campaign, Johnson stated that the war would be limited and Americans would stay away from the war (Goldstein, 1993:98). However, as Vietnam War went deeper, the war became unpopular inside and outside of the United States. The United States sought the allies that could support the United States in Asia. The United States needed the allies assistance to enhance the military operation and to justify the Vietnam War (Cho, Soon Sung, 1982:81). On July 25, 1965, the United States asked South Korea to dispatch the troops to Vietnam. On July 29, the same year, President Park responded that South Korea would send its troops to Vietnam. On August 13, this decision was ratified by the South Korean National Assembly (Choi, Chong-ki, 1982:106). South Korea had both moral and legal responsibilities to assist U.S. efforts in Vietnam in view of the Korean War and the terms of U.S.-Korean Mutual Defense Treaty signed in 1954 (Han, Sung-Joo, 1985:152). Started with a modest dispatch of noncombat troops in 1965, the number of South Korean military personnel increased up to 50,000 by the end of 1969 (Buss, 1982:79-80).

In addition to this reason, there were several reasons South Korea sent its troops to Vietnam. First, as the United States became deeply involved in Vietnam War, South Korea became concerned about weakening of the U.S. security commitment to the Korean peninsula. In fact, the United States continued to reduce the amount of U.S. military assistance since 1956. The average amount of annual U.S. military aid was \$232 million during the period of 1956-61. It was reduced to \$154 million for the period of 1962-65. Second, a most significant contribution to the dispatch of South Korean combat troops to the Vietnam War was the possible movement of one or more division of U.S. forces from South Korea to Vietnam if the United States did not receive additional support from its allies. During the negotiation, South Korea sought a promise from the United States that it would not reduce its troop level in South Korea.

Eventually, the United States confirmed that "there would be no reduction in U.S. forces level remained and unchanged," and that "no U.S. troops would be withdrawn without prior consultation with the Republic of Korea" (Han, Sung-Joo, 1985:151).

After the decision to dispatch of South Korean troops to Vietnam, the United States reassured South Korea that it would continue to commit itself to the security of South Korea. On 23 January, 1966, during his visit to Seoul, Vice-president Humphrey addressed the strongest the U.S. security commitment to South Korea as follows:

The United States Government and the people of the United States have a firm commitment to the defense of Korea. As long as there is one American soldier on the line of the border, the demarcation line, the whole and entire power of the United States of America is committed to the security and defense of Korea. Korea today is as strong as the United States and Korea put together. America today is as strong as the United States and Korea put together. We are allies, we are friends, you should have no question, no doubts. (Buss, 1982:77)

In November, 1966, President Johnson, in the meeting with President Park, "reaffirmed the readiness and determination of the United States to render prompt and effective assistance to defeat an armed attack against the Republic of Korea." The key words in his speech, "prompt and effective assistance to defeat," was considered by South Korea as "to take automatic and instantaneous action" rather than the meaningless reaffirmation (Buss, 1982:78).

In spite of U.S. efforts to preserve the security of South Korea, the tension between South and North Korea intensified after the South Korea's participation in the Vietnam War. The demilitarized line conflicts and the number of infiltration from North increased dramatically. On 21 January, 1968, a group of 31 North Korean special forces attempted to attack the Blue House to assassinate President Park. They were detected by the Blue House guards only a few blocks from the Blue House (Cho, Soon Sung, 1982:82). Two days later, on 23 January, 1968, North Korea seized the US intelligence ship Pueblo, which was in the international waters, and towed it

into WonSan port along with its crew of 82 men. The U.S.S. Pueblo was one of America's electronic intelligence ships with a nine-hundred-ton hull equipped with highly sophisticated instruments to collect electromagnetic intelligence information along the east coast of North Korea. President Johnson tried to threaten North Korea to release the vessel and crew by alerting about fifteen thousand air force and navy reserves and dispatching nuclear-powered aircraft carrier, Enterprise, to the Sea of Japan. By doing so, the United States wanted to strengthen its diplomatic position to solve this problem by showing military action which might be taken against North Korea in the event of North Korea's refusal to release the ship and its crew (Kim, Young Hum, 1981:312). Fearing that the use of force would endanger the lives of the crewmen, Johnson chose to use diplomacy. Also the United States did not permit South Korea to retaliate for the North Korean assassination attempt on President Park (Lee, Suk Bok, 1987:68). In December, 1968, after the United States' public apology for, and official admission of, the violation of North Korean territorial waters, the crewmen returned home (Kim, Young Hum, 1981:315).

After the two incidents, however, South Korea began to doubt the United States' determination to commit the security of South Korea. South Korea felt that the United States' action was not adequate for the Pueblo incident and its refusal to South Korea's retaliation for the North Korean assassination attempt. Actually, South Korea thought that the release of Pueblo crewmen was less important than the retaliation for the North Korean commando attack on the Blue House. South Korea felt the United States had to take strong retaliatory action to the North Korean assassination attempt. To ease the South Korean frustration, along with a \$100 million military aid program including F-4 aircraft and M-16 replacements, the United States expressed its strong determination to counter armed attack against South Korea (Lee, Chae-Jin, 1982:44).

On April, 1968, President Johnson, in the meeting with President Park, made following statement:

Further aggressive actions from the North would constitute a grave threat to peace and in that event, the two governments would immediately determine the action to be taken to meet this threat under the Mutual Defense Treaty between the United States and the Republic of Korea. In accordance with this Treaty, President Johnson reaffirmed the readiness and determination of the United States to render prompt and effective assistance to repel armed attacks against the Republic of Korea. (Buss, 1982:78)

During this meeting, both countries also agreed to regular government cabinet meeting to deal with military assistance and to meet the North Koreans infiltration and sabotage (Buss, 1982:79).

After taking the power, Park, Chung Hee prepared new policies that focused on the economy stabilization at the beginning of his long military dictatorship. His new policies that called for stabilization of South Korean economy were as follows:

(1) dispatching R.O.K. troops and civilian workers to fight for the United States in Vietnam, thereby earning among other things, "special procurements" and various "remittances"; (2) inducing large amounts of foreign loan capital; (3) exporting South Korean coal miners and nurses to West Germany; and (4) normalizing diplomatic relations with Japan, thereby securing Japanese "economic cooperation" as a constituent element of R.O.K. economic planning." (Bix, 1985: 207)

Beginning with Park's economy recovery policy and first Five-Year Plan adopted in 1962, South Korea's economic condition improved dramatically. During the period of 1961-1967, per capita GNP increased from \$108 million to \$139 million and exports increased from \$33 million to \$350 million. Although this dramatic economic improvement came from the Koreans hard work, there were two important factors to support those changes: "normalization of relations with Japan and the payment of substantial sums to the ROK as a reward for its participation in the hostilities in Vietnam" (Buss, 1982:76).

After the normalization of relations with Japan, Japan's investments in South Korea significantly influenced on the U.S.-South Korean economic program. By the end of 1969,



South Korea received \$123 million in grants and \$75 million in government loans from Japan. Also, the amount of commercial loan reached \$380 million (Lee, Chae-Jin, 1982:36). A most significant contribution to the South Korea's economy expansion and military buildup was the involvement in the Vietnam War. Before the first dispatch of South Korea's combat troops to Vietnam, in 1965, the United States agreed to:

not to reduce its forces in the ROK; to amend MAP to Korea's benefit; to modernize Korean forces in the ROK in firepower, communications, and mobility; to provide equipment, logistical support, construction, training, transportation, subsistence, overseas allowance, and funds for legitimate noncombatant claims that might be brought against the ROK forces in Vietnam; to make restitution for cash losses by Korean forces in Vietnam that did not result from negligence. (Buss, 1982:80)

In March 1966, coincident with the dispatch of the second combat troops, the agreement between the two countries was made to enhance the completeness of South Korea's defense and economic progress in detail:

1. To provide over the next few years substantial items of equipment for the modernization of Republic of Korea forces in Korea. 2. To equip as necessary, and finance all additional *won* costs of the additional forces deployed to the Republic of Vietnam. 3. To equip, provide for the training and finance complete replacement of the additional forces deployed to the Republic of Vietnam. 4. To contribute to filling the requirements determined by our two governments to be necessary, following completion of a joint United States-Republic of Korea study, for the improvement of the Republic of Korean antiinfiltration capability. 5. To provide equipment to expand the Republic of Korea arsenal for increased ammunition production in Korea. ... 10. To provide death and disability gratuities resulting from casualties in Vietnam at double the rates recently agreed to by the joint United States-Republic of Korea Military Committee. (Buss, 1982:80-81)

In addition to the compensation for the dispatch of the South Korean troops to Vietnam, there were several reasons the United States increased its military aid to South Korea. First, the flexible response strategy, which emphasized conventional forces, began to operate fully during this period. Second, North Korea began to receive the large amount of arms supplies from the Soviet Union and China. Third, the United States regarded the constant incidents in the

demilitarized zone caused by North Korea as a possible cause of another war in the Korean peninsula. Therefore, the United States felt the need for strengthening the South Korea's military capability. The amount of US military assistance to South Korea increased from \$124 million in 1964 to \$480 million in 1969 (Yim, Yong Soon, 1982:307-309).

Along with the great amount of military aid, the United States was actively involved in South Korea's economic development program through the Agency for International Development (AID). The United States advised South Korea on a variety of economic issues such as tax reform, floating exchange rate, import liberalization, stabilization program, and currency devaluation. During the 1965-70 period, the United States provided South Korea with more than \$1 billion in connection with military aid program. Also, South Korea earned another billion dollars associated with various business activities during the Vietnam War (Lee, Chae-Jin, 1982:36-37).

By February 7, 1970, however, South Korea suffered 3,094 battle deaths, 3,051 wounded and four missing in action in the Vietnam War and received U.S. aid less than Japan and only a little more than Taiwan, neither of which participated in the war (Buss, 1982:80, 82).

### **Nixon Era (1969- 1974)**

As Richard Nixon took office, he was convinced that the United States had neither the economic nor political wherewithal to build the military forces necessary to adequately meet the global interests inherent in the flexible response strategy. What was needed, he felt, was a scaling back of U.S. interests, a decreased emphasis on military policy, and an increased emphasis on diplomatic and economic policy to meet those interests. U.S. vital interests dictated

that a balance of power be maintained among the Soviet Union, Europe, the United States, Japan, and the People's Republic of China (Sorley, 1983:22-24).

In July 1969 at Guam, President Nixon announced his foreign policy known as the Nixon Doctrine as follows:

The United States will participate in the defense and development of allies and friends, but,... American cannot - and will not - conceive all the plans, develop all the programs, execute all the decisions and undertake all the defense of the free nations of the world. We will help where it makes a real difference and is considered in our interest. (Yim, Yong Soon, 1982:295)

On 3 November, 1969, during his foreign policy address, President Nixon also stated the key principles of his doctrine as follows:

First, the United States will keep all of its treaty commitments. Second, we shall provide a shield if a nuclear power threatens the freedom of a nation allied with us or of a nation whose survival we consider vital to our security. Third, in cases involving other types of aggression, we shall furnish military and economic assistance when requested in accordance with our treaty commitments. But we shall look to the nation directly threatened to assume the primary responsibility of providing the manpower for its defense. (Sorley, 1983:24)

The United States switched its basic foreign policy concept from moral tenet to national interests. As enunciated in the Nixon doctrine, the United States would provide those countries economic assistance and weapons to defend themselves, but would not provide U.S. troops. Further, providing aid and arms to certain countries should result in strong regional policemen to maintain regional order and, concomitantly, protect U.S. interests. Although it was not addressed explicitly, the Nixon Doctrine also emphasized shared responsibility for defense and suggested a reexamination of the nature of U.S. commitments. The United States learned that its military strategy could not operate effectively without strong support from the indigenous forces in the Vietnam War. Promising to continue to commit its treaty, the United States would seek a liquidation of some past relationship and practices (Yim, Yong Soon, 1982:255).

Right before the announcement of the Nixon Doctrine, on April 15, 1969, once again North Korea's aggressiveness was demonstrated by the shooting down of a United States Navy EC-121 reconnaissance aircraft with 31 crew members over the Sea of Japan. In response to this incident, the US congress called for retaliation by all means and President Nixon considered a number of possible retaliatory action against North Korea- such as air strikes, a torpedo attack against the North Korean navy, mining of the North Korean harbors, and seizure of merchant ships. However, President Nixon just sent three Phantom squadrons to South Korea to reinforce the airpower of the South Korea Air Force. The retaliation did not become real and the incident only became another show of force. Thus, once again, South Korea was disappointed with the emerging pattern of U.S. self-restraint, which could only encourage North Korea belligerency. South Korea seriously began to doubt whether the United States, bogged down in the Vietnam War and undergoing an erosion in its global influence, had the determination to protect South Korea effectively in the event of an armed attack (Lee, Suk Bok, 1987:69). The Nixon Doctrine further put South Korea into serious doubt about the U.S. military reliability.

The Nixon doctrine signaled the beginning of a process that was to significantly affect United States' military posture in Asia. In the line with this concept, the United States decided to reduce its troop level in East Asia from 740,000 in January 1969 to less than 420,000 in June 1971. While most of this reduction came from Vietnam, over 50,000 troops came from other Asian countries. South Korea was not excluded from this reduction (Levin, 1983:47).

In July 1970, the U.S. ambassador informed South Korean government that there would be the possibility of the withdrawal of one US division with prior consultation with South Korea. US advocates of troop withdrawal from South Korea insisted that South Korea no longer had sufficient strategic value for the United States as tripwire and the Soviet Union and China did not

want the war in Korea. These advocates argued further that the South Korea economy was strong enough to protect itself without any ground troop support from the United States. On the other hand, South Korea feared that this withdrawal might be the beginning of a complete military pullout and there would be a risk that North Korea try a military venture against the South (Han, Sung Joo, 1985:155-156).

Despite South Korea's effort to stop the US troop withdrawal, on 22 July, 1970, during the third South Korea and US security consultation meeting, the following agreements were made:

(1) In order to improve the defense capabilities of Korea, considerable US military aid should be maintained. (2) It would be desirable to develop defense industries in Korea. (3) A plan to move some air force units from other US bases to the base in Korea should be developed and the United States would provide some Navy S-2 type aircraft in a short period of time. (Lee, Suk Bok, 1987:62)

However, South Korea was disappointed about this agreement and then asked for more military aid and combat equipment. On 24 August, 1970, Vice President Agnew arrived in South Korea and discussed this issue. On 6 February, 1971, the United States and South Korea reached the agreements and announced the matter of US troop withdrawal and modernization plan for the South Korean Armed Forces (Lee, Suk Bok, 1987:61-62).

On 10 March, 1971, the 7th Infantry Division began to withdraw from South Korea. The 2d Infantry Division gave back its 18 and 1/2 miles of Demilitarized Zone (DMZ) to the South Korean Army and took responsibility for the 7th Infantry's positions between Seoul and the DMZ. For the first time, the South Korean Army defended the entire 155 mile DMZ. The only exception was the Joint Security Area (JSA) at Panmunjom where the Military Armistice Commission (MAC) had originally negotiated the Armistice and continued to meet periodically with North Koreans. Additionally, one infantry battalion from the 2d Infantry Division was

stationed at the access road leading to the DMZ and on to the JSA and Panmunjom. With only one US division in South Korea, the President Nixon enhanced the United States Air Force in South Korea with an additional F-4 squadron from Japan (White, 1990:37-38).

In addition to the provision of increments of first-line equipment such as F-4 fighter aircraft, in 1971, the United States agreed to support a five-year military modernization program for South Korea. The purpose of this program was to compensate South Korea for the withdrawal of a US division and to rectify the growing imbalance between the forces of the South and North. This program included major weapon such as F-4 Phantom aircraft, M-48 Patton tanks, armored personnel carriers, heavy artillery, and Honest John surface-to-surface missiles. However, this program did not go well as scheduled because of inadequate congressional financing. In the middle of this program, the United States also changed much of its military assistance from government grants to credit sales. Eventually, this program was completed in 1977 and the size of this program was increased to a total of \$1.5 billion (Levin, 1983:48).

The U.S. troop withdrawal, however, had two side impacts on the security of South Korea. Positively, the U.S. withdrawal and attempt to rearrange its relation with South Korea resulted in urging South Korea to accept the need for greater self-reliance. Negatively, the U.S. actions raised widespread doubts about the reliability of the U.S. commitment. In spite of reaffirmation of the U.S. determination not to withdraw any more major units, the South Korea government did not have full confidence in the United States (Levin, 1983:48).

During the Nixon era, besides the U.S. troop withdrawal from South Korea, a number of developments in South Korea affected the United States' commitments to the security of South Korea. In the early 1970s, President Park faced both a domestic political challenge and, as he

apparently perceived it, a threat to national security. The United States, South Korea's traditional protector, was bogged down in Vietnam; it had proclaimed the Nixon Doctrine and had unilaterally pulled one of its two army divisions out of Korea; it had reversed its twenty year hostility toward China. Secret contacts by the South Korean government with North Korea led to a brief thaw in North-South relations but also apparently gave the president a new sense of the extraordinary military preparedness of the North. President Park feared that one more Korean War might break out if the United States left South Korea. In response to the domestic and international situation, President Park did several efforts. First, he decided to order the massive campaign to persuade the U.S. government and Congress not to withdraw U.S. troops and at least to provide South Korea with a massive military assistance and security commitment. Later, this incident developed into a big political issue, called Koreagate campaign, between the two countries. Second, along with the opening of a North-South dialogue, President Park adopted the autocratic Yushin Constitution. Finally, he began to develop a new self-strengthening movement in the military with a careful examination of acquiring its own nuclear weapons (Morley, 1983:26-27).

After Nixon took office, the United States initiated a dramatic transformation in the policy of containment and isolation of China. In July 1971, Henry Kissinger, Nixon's assistant for national security affairs, secretly visited Peking. Soon after his visit, in February 1972, President Nixon visited China. The U.S. fundamental relationship change with China had profound effects on relations between South and North Korea and on US policy toward South Korea.

The opening of a North-South Korean dialogue in July 1972 was the most significant and tangible effect of détente between the United States and China. South Korea, during the

participation in the dialogue, probably encouraged by the United States, focused on exploring the possibility of ending the extreme hostility that prevailed in the peninsula for twenty-five years. On the other hand, North Korea focused on weakening United States' justification for keeping troops in South Korea and on securing a new respectability and status as a bona fide member of the international community (Han, Sung-Joo, 1985:158). After Lee, Hu Rak, Director of the South Korean Central Intelligence Agency, secretly visited North Korea, on July 4, 1972, South and North Korea announced the agreement on the principle of the reunification of Korea as follows:

First, reunification shall be attained independently without either relying upon or tolerating interference from any external power. Second, reunification shall be realized through peaceful means rather than through the use of force against each other. Third, both sides shall promote a great national unity as a homogeneous people, transcending differences in ideas, ideologies, and systems. (Koh, Byung Chul, 1985:88)

However, as these rounds of talks progressed during 1973, there was a fundamental cleavage between South and North Korea. North Korea advocated a comprehensive, drastic political solution of all unification problems, including mutual arms reduction. South Korea adopted an incremental and functionalist approach, stressing practical cooperation in humanitarian, cultural, and economic areas rather than difficult political and military issues. Mutual distrust was still deep-seated, and political propaganda overshadowed the promise of reciprocal compromises. The negotiations became deadlock in August 1973 (Cho, Soon Sung, 1982:90-91).

During the negotiation between the South and North, the United States, however, began to realize strong skepticism about the prospect of Korean unification because of a number of drastic reforms initiated by President Park. Many South Koreans also began to believe that the government broke its promise, in which the government would follow a step-by-step approach



toward unification, by reaching a substantive and very important agreement with North Korea in secret and over the heads of the people. Consequently, this situation was getting worse and caused intensive ideological confusion and President Park's leadership crisis. To deal with the national crisis, President Park, relying on emergency powers, declared martial law, suspended certain articles of the constitution and dissolved the National Assembly. President Park argued that the government needed firmer controls over its population in view of the unpredictable shifts in the international situation. Subsequently, on October 17, 1972, President Park introduced a new constitution called Yushin. This new Constitution became the target of criticism both in South Korea and from across the world (Lee, Jung Ha, 1988:37).

In addition to this issue, there were several things that influenced on U.S. policy toward South Korea. Further to ensure political control, in August 1973, the South Korean Central Intelligence Agency abducted Kim, Dae Jung, a former presidential candidate, from his Tokyo hotel room. At the same time, President Park announced harsh emergency decrees to limit political dissent and popular opposition. Resistance soon spread beyond the students to involve Christian leaders, newspapers, and opposition politicians. A series of government actions such as arrests, trials, release from prison, censoring of the press, and the abrogation of some decrees failed to subdue the opposition, but the President Park's determination to maintain the new constitution remained firm. In the process, these issues stimulated increasingly negative sentiments among the U.S. public toward involvement in Korea in general and toward the South Korean government in particular (Buss, 1982:132).

During the Nixon era, the circumstance of U.S. military aid program changed significantly. Although a large amount of military aid to South Korea continued until 1973, it gradually decreased. The military assistance decreased from \$296 million in 1973 to \$92 million

in 1974. However, the total amount of arms transaction between the two countries was actually increased. As South Korea began to purchase military equipment under FMS programs in 1971, the United States began to reduce its grant aid for operations and maintenance. The increasing military sale substituting for military aid program became the new trend of U.S. policy. The change from military assistance program to military sale to South Korea was fast and a large amount of arms was delivered to South Korea under FMS. The military sales agreement between the United States and South Korea increased from \$295,000 in 1967 to \$100 million in 1974. At the same time, the United States also provided a \$15 million loan to purchase arms for South Korea in 1971 and then military loans increased up to \$59 million in 1975 (Levin, 1983:49, Yim Yong Soon, 1982:309-310).

There were several reasons that contribute to change the circumstance of U.S. military assistance. First, Nixon Doctrine demanded a shared responsibility of defense. The United States already applied this concept to Western Europe and further demanded South Korea to share the burden of defense. Second, the United States faced a number of domestic problems such as economic difficulties, deficit of balance, and rapidly escalating oil prices due to the Vietnam War and oil shock. Third, the South Korean economy improved dramatically. South Korea economic capabilities had reached the point where it could bear the debt burden of loans on favorable terms. During this period, the growth of South Korea GNP was 7 percent in 1972 and 15.2 percent in 1976 (Yim, Yong Soon, 1982:310).

At the same time United States reduced its military assistance to South Korea, there was a sharp decline in foreign economic assistance. Foreign economic aid reduced from 5 percent of South Korea's GNP in 1969 to 1.8 percent of that in 1975 (Levin, 1983:50). In 1971, the United States changed its economic policy toward South Korea significantly. Assuming that South

Korea was able to handle its own defense budget and meet its foreign loan obligations, the United States ended its security-oriented assistance program, which had reached to \$2.3 billion since 1954. Also, for the first time, loans exceeded grants in the total amount of U.S. economic assistance to South Korea. The Agency for International Development (AID)'s policy role in South Korea also changed from one of direct decision making to that of an advisory and mediatory partnership. While considerably assisting in research and training operations, AID provided a peripheral assistance to prepare the Third (1972-76) and Fourth (1977-81) Five-Year Plans. South Korea tried to keep important ties with several countries, especially with Japan, in order to reduce economic dependence on the United States (Lee, Chae-Jin, 1982:154-155).

### **Ford Era (1974- 1977)**

The 1972 break-in at the Democratic presidential campaign headquarters at the Watergate building aroused little public interest until Congress opened hearings in mid-1973. By the end of 1973, many of Nixon's top assistance had resigned in disgrace. In August, 1974, as the House of Representatives was preparing impeachment papers, Nixon announced his resignation. Nixon was succeeded by Vice-President Gerald Ford. Continuity of key personnel, including Kissinger and the rest of the Cabinet, greatly facilitated a smooth transition.

When President Ford started his business, he was faced with domestic and international problems such as political trauma on the domestic front, continuing disagreements with the Soviet Union and among allies, rapidly escalating oil prices, and an incipient recession. He also dealt with the dilemma of meeting the requests for arms as part of foreign policy while still remaining within the bounds of existing or pending legislation (DISAM, 1996:22). Responding to a direct outgrowth of the U.S. experience in Vietnam and a seemingly uncontrolled race to arm

the world, along with the human rights issues in the Third World, the U.S. public became more aware of security assistance. Congress also became actively concerned about U.S. involvement in the international arms trade and U.S. arms transfer. These circumstances forced the United States Congress to enact the Foreign Assistance Act of 1974, which directed the president to reduce or terminate military or economic assistance to any government engaged in a consistent pattern of gross violation of internationally recognized human rights (Buss, 1982:132).

Additionally, the Foreign Assistance Act of 1975 required the State Department to prepare reports on the status of human rights in countries receiving U.S. aid. This act stimulated legislative requirements for closer scrutiny of potential arms transfer by the Department of State and Defense. These circumstances further demanded the strengthening of legislation, the International Security Assistance and Arms Export Control Act (AECA) of 1976, which gave Congress the right to prevent certain types of sales. This act prohibited arms transfers to any country found to be in systematic violation of human rights; and it terminated grant aid and Military Assistance Advisory Groups (MAAGs) by September 1977 (DISAM, 1996:22-23).

Meanwhile, President Park's effort to suppress the opposition and hold his power, reported in detail in the American press, evoked strong criticism in the United States. In 1974 and 1975 Congress held hearings and expressed deep concern about the human rights issue in the Third World. Especially, U.S. Congress had more concern over the human rights issue in South Korea and feared that the continued violation of human rights in South Korea could lead to a degree of instability endangering the lives of American troops stationed there. A congressional committee further claimed that the U.S. Second Division be withdrawn from its forward position north of Seoul and be relocated to the rear. This reflected, besides its concern over the human rights issue in South Korea, the United States' effort to prevent automatic involvement in any

military conflict and to earn the time to consider whether or not direct military intervention by ground forces was necessary (Clough, 1976:30).

To demonstrate congressional concern over human rights issue in South Korea, the Foreign Assistance Act for 1974 limited military assistance to South Korea to \$145 million and its fiscal 1975 assistance package withheld the last \$20 million of that year's \$165 million authorization until President Park improved the human rights situation in South Korea. Actually, the United States carried out only 69 percent of its military assistance to South Korea in the 1971-1975 period. The rest of it was implemented in the 1976-1977 period (Levin, 1983:49).

While there had been expression of concern from the Congress and from various human rights groups, in May 1975, following the ignominious American exit from Saigon put a temporary halt to congressional efforts to diminish the U.S. role in South Korea. At the time Saigon was falling in 1975, Kim, Il Sung was traveling to both Moscow and Peking, quite possibly in search of support for a plan to start the Korean War again when a war-weary United States would be least likely to respond. After the collapse of the South Vietnamese government, President Park issued a broad new emergency measure prohibiting political activity to prevent the social turmoil. However, opposition activity lessened during the summer of 1975 due to an increased sense of threat from North Korea.

To respond Kim's unusual visit to Moscow and Peking, the United States warned North Korea not to miscalculate United States' determination to commit the security of South Korea. Secretary of Defense James Schlesinger visited South Korea and said "it is necessary to go for the heart of the opponent's power; destroy his military forces rather than simply being involved endlessly in ancillary military operation" (Kwak, Tae-Hwan, 1982:228). Also, he did not rule out the possibility that the United States would use tactical nuclear weapons in Korea if required.

On December 7, 1975, President Ford announced a new Pacific Doctrine, which contained U.S. determination to stay in Asia as Pacific power in the post-Indochina era. He also reassured South Korea that the United States would continue to commit to peace and security on the Korean peninsula, as the presence of U.S. forces demonstrated. Ford's Pacific Doctrine reflected that the United States changed its view on Pacific region from the low military posture inherent in the Nixon Doctrine to the active involvement in economic, political, and military affairs to protect its interests as a Pacific power. In mid summer, 1976, while recalling that Americans fought and died to preserve South Korean's independence, Secretary of State Kissinger again addressed the United States' determination to commit the security of South Korea as follows:

Our experience and our sacrifice defined stake in the preservation of this hard-won stability; treaty obligations of mutual defense defined legal obligations, [and] our support and assistance will be available where it has been promised... In fulfilling our commitments we will look to South Korea to assume the primary responsibility for its own defense, especially in manpower. And, we will continue to remind the South Korean Government that responsiveness to the popular will and social justice are essential if subversion and external challenge are to be resisted. But, we shall not forget that our alliance with South Korea is designed to meet an external threat which affects our own security, and that of Japan as well. (Buss, 1982:147)

In the wake of the collapse of the South Vietnamese government and Kim's visit to Moscow and Peking, President Park decided to enhance the South Korean military capability. South Korea started a Force Improvement Plan (FIP) designed to raise its forces to a level at which it could face the North Korean military threat with confidence even though U.S. forces were no longer in South Korea. To achieve this objective, South Korea increased its defense budget from 4 to about 7 percent of GNP. South Korea also imposed a special defense tax for this program. The United States, along with the South Korea's efforts, played a great role in assisting the effort through continued MAP deliveries and rapidly increasing Foreign Military Sales (FMS) (Levin, 1983:48). South Korea purchased \$219 million worth of military

equipment in 1974 and 1975. Additionally, South Korea purchased \$509.5 million worth of equipment including aircraft and missiles in 1976. As a result of this effort, South Korea was capable of producing or coproducing by 1976 its own boats, tanks, and M-16 rifles. Also, the South Korea forces were equipped with new equipment such as F-4 aircraft, medium tanks, and Honest surface-to-surface missiles. However, with regard to the amount of equipment units, the South Korean force capability was not enough to match that of North Korea, particularly in navy and air force. Thus, the presence of U.S. troops contributed to fill in this gap by supplementing the South Korean forces with tactical nuclear weapons. Extensive U.S. military aid and training to the South Korean forces also contributed to enhance the South Korean forces. Although a few numbers of U.S. troops with nuclear capability would serve in South Korea, it significantly contributed to a balanced force in the Korean peninsula (Yim, Yong Soon, 1982:228-299).

After the initiation of U.S. troop withdrawal and the collapse of the South Vietnamese government, South Korea also became interested in possessing nuclear weapons. On June 1975, President Park said "South Korea would and could develop its own nuclear weapons if the U.S. nuclear umbrella is withdrawn" (Kwak, Tae-Hwan, 1982:229). However, he canceled this statement on January 29, 1977. At that time, the United States was very sensitive about this issue and did not want South Korea to possess a nuclear power because the United States thought that South Korea's possession of nuclear weapons could cause a new arms race between South and North Korea (Kwak, Tae-Hwan, 1982:229).

Despite the repeated reaffirmation of United States' security commitment of South Korea, it did not take long for the U.S. military commitments to be tested at Panmunjom. On August 18, 1976, when a United Nations command personnel attempted to trim a poplar tree in the neutral Joint Security Area because the tree obstructed the observation of North Korean

personnel, thirty North Korean Army guards opposed the tree-pruning operation and attacked UN command personnel with axes, ax handles, and metal pipes. Two U.S. officers were killed and nine other UN command personnel injured. The United States immediately issued a strong protest to North Korea, demanding explanations and reparations, and sent a 110-man UN command task force to cut down the tree in a show of force. The United States, along with South Korea, placed its forces on full alert, deployed to South Korea F-4 aircraft from Okinawa, F-111s from Idaho, and B-52 bombers from Guam and dispatched the Midway task force to the area. On 21 August, the military demonstration indeed forced the North Korea's President Kim, Il Sung to express his "regret" over the incident and offer a conciliatory proposal for new security measures in Panmunjom. The initial U.S. response was to reject his noncommittal "regret" as unacceptable, but it decided to resolve the potentially explosive crisis by agreeing to consider his proposal. Once again, the United States showed its limitations of military demonstration to the North Korea's terrorism (Lee, Suk Bok, 1987:69-70). The South Koreans were unhappy about what they regarded as the pattern of United States nonpunitive reaction to North Korea's repeated challenges, which had started from the Pueblo (1968) and EC-121(1969) incidents.

### **Carter Era ( 1977- 1981)**

In 1976, foreign policy was not a big issue in the election between Gerald Ford and Jimmy Carter. During the presidential campaign, Carter emphasized that the government should be honest and efficient. He also said that he would balance the budget, reduce unemployment, and pay attention to other domestic problems. With regard to foreign policy, Carter criticized the careless use of military forces by Nixon and Ford and promised to infuse Christian morality into foreign policy. He also insisted that the United States should allow local forces to solve their



disputes without great-power intervention and pay attention to other international issues such as pollution, hunger, population growth, and poverty (Goldstein, 1993:165).

Another foreign issue associated with Carter's religious belief was human rights. In March 1997, addressing a town meeting in Clinton, Massachusetts, Carter stated his view on human rights as follows:

I want to see our country set a standard of morality. I feel very deeply that when people are put in prison without trial and tortured and deprived of basic human rights that the President of the United States ought to have a right to express displeasure and do something about it ... I want our country to be the focal point for deep concern about human beings all over the world. (Goldstein, 1993:166)

Zbigniew Brzezinski, President Carter's national security advisor, also explained the administration's interests in human rights as follows:

In international affairs, there seemed to be a moral vacuum. The Carter Administration resolved to make a break with the recent past, to bring the conduct of foreign affairs into line with the nation's political values and ideals, and to revitalize an American image which had been tarnished by the Vietnam experience. (Goldstein, 1993:166)

To assist human rights issue on foreign policy, President Carter created a new job, assistant secretary of state for human rights, and chose civil rights activist Patricia Derian for that position. He also found a new Interagency Group on Human Rights and Foreign Assistance to scrutinize foreign aid decisions from a human rights viewpoint (Goldstein, 1993:166).

Long before the inauguration of President Carter the South Korean government knew what the position of his government might be on American ground troops and the human rights situation in South Korea. As the Democratic candidate for the presidency, Jimmy Carter had promised to withdraw all forces from South Korea, and expressed deep concern over human rights in South Korea. He believed that South Korea was much less important to the United

States than were Europe and the Middle East. Also, he did not want U.S. troops to be used as tripwire and involved in another land war in Asia (Buss, 1982:148).

Although the United States attempted to arrange relations with South Korea in a new way under the broad principles of the Nixon Doctrine, its basic security commitment to South Korea firmly continued until 1975. Upon his election, however, President Carter again pledged to withdraw its troops from South Korea, to reduce U.S. weapons exports, and to improve the human rights situation in South Korea. These issues had a significant impact on South Korea and the relationship between the two countries (Levin, 1983:50-51).

On 9 March, 1977, at the meeting with South Korean Foreign Minister Park, Tong Jin, President Carter informed him officially that the United States would withdraw its troops from South Korea (Sohn, Hak-Kyu, 1989:113). President Carter planned to withdraw U.S. troops in three phases over the next five years. The first phase was the withdrawal of one brigade of the Second Division and other support units totaling 6,000 men in 1978-1979, while adding a dozen F-4 aircraft and establishing a new combined U.S.-South Korea command. The second phase was the withdrawal of logistic and other support units totaling 9,000 men. The timing of the final phase would depend on political development, but the remaining two brigades and headquarters of the Second Division were to be left in South Korea until at least July 1982. After that date, total U.S. forces would be 12,000 men consisting of an air division, a small naval group, and army intelligence, logistics, and communications personnel (Buss, 1982:149, Levin, 1983:51).

According to a testimony of Michael Armacost, Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense, before the Senate Armed Services Committee on March 6, 1979, there were several facts that explain the U.S. troop withdrawal policy of Carter Administration. First, South Korea was able

to defend itself without the assistance of U.S. ground combat forces, supported by the U.S. afforded air, naval, and logistic support to South Korea. Second, neither the Soviet Union nor China would encourage or support a North Korean armed invasion. Third, South Korea had impressive economic growth, which contributed to the balance of power in South Korea's favor. Fourth, the United States would modernize the South Korean forces with carefully prepared withdrawal plan over a period of four or five years. Fifth, the United States would keep an effective deterrent through continued deployment of air power in South Korea after U.S. ground troops had been completely withdrawn from South Korea, leaving some residual ground units to perform logistic, communications, and other functions (Kawk, Tae-Hwan, 1982:232).

In addition to these reasons, there were underlying reasons and objectives for the withdrawal decision. The decision was to fulfill President Carter's election-campaign promise, which was designed to exploit the post-Vietnam U.S. concerns with further military involvement in Asia. Presidential Review Memorandum (PRM) No.13, prepared by the National Security Council, indicated that the decision was prompted by the strong desire of President Carter's principal advisers to avoid a situation in which the United States would automatically become involved in ground warfare in the event of conflict on the Korean peninsula (Kwak, Tae-Hwan, 1982:232).

In July 1977, the Tenth Annual Security Consultative Meeting was held to formulate conditions for the withdrawal that would preserve the military balance and not endanger the South Korean security. After the meeting, both countries agreed that the threat from the North was serious, that U.S. military support was important, and that it was essential to maintain the defense capability of South Korea at a state of readiness to deter a renewal of hostilities. The United States reaffirmed that the planned withdrawal signified no change in the U.S.

commitment to the security of South Korea and the U.S. determination to provide prompt and effective support to assist South Korea against armed attack (Lee, Chae-Jin, 1982:114).

The United States promised to provide a major expansion of arms transfer to South Korea to compensate for the withdrawal of U.S. ground troops. The United States agreed to provide \$275 million in FMS credits in Fiscal Year 1979 and the similar amount over the succeeding years of the withdrawal. The United States also promised to transfer \$800 million worth of the Second Division's military equipment to South Korea and to provide about \$2.5 million worth of technical training to the South Korean forces for operation of the newly acquired defense equipment (Levin, 1983:52). Additionally, the United States promised to support the South Korea's self-sufficiency effort in arms manufacture by providing advanced technology, to conduct joint military exercise, and to establish a combined U.S.-South Korea forces command to improve operational efficiency (Buss, 1982:150).

Congressional support for U.S. military and economic assistance to South Korea was troubled, however, by a number of developments. One of the most significant problems was the discovery of a Korean influence-buying scandal, subsequently known as Koreagate, which was the top issue during President Carter's first year in office. On October 24, 1976, *Washington Post* report, based on a leaked report from a secret grand jury investigation of the Koreagate scandals, triggered the diplomatic conflict between the United States and South Korea. The *Post* reported that under the guidance of the South Korean government, Park, Tong Son had used from half million to one million dollars a year to bribe congressmen and other U.S. officials, that the U.S. CIA had eavesdropped on the Blue House and had tape recorded the planning sessions for Park's bribery scheme, and that President Park himself had taken part in some of these activities. In early 1977, both the House of Representative and the Senate authorized their respective ethics

committees to investigate the Koreagate allegations. In August 1977, the Department of Justice charged Park, Tong Son, who had returned South Korea, in the connection with Koreagate. The U.S. government also requested Park, Tong Son's extradition to the United States to face criminal charges. However, the South Korean government insisted it could not force Park, Tong Son to go to the United States. In February 1978, finally, Park, Tong Son went to the United States to testify voluntarily before secret hearings of the ethics committees of both Houses (Sohn, Hak-Kyu, 1989:114-115).

In response to South Korea's uncooperative attitudes, the House Committee on International Relations refused to consider President Carter's request to authorize the transfer of \$800 million worth of equipment until the South Korean government became cooperative. While a proposal to end all U.S. military assistance to South Korea was unsupported, Congress cut off \$56 million in food aid in 1978 as a symbolic gesture. Meanwhile, although U.S. military credit sales increased, MAP totals decreased from \$60 million in 1976 to nothing in 1978 in accordance with the general alteration from grant aid to loans and credit guarantees. Along with the Carter administration's emphasis on human rights and the troop withdrawal policy, Koreagate brought about serious conflict between the two countries. This also suggested that the different interpretation on the importance of South Korea to the United States existed within the administration (Levin, 1983:52).

During the period of 1978-1979, a number of developments forced President Carter to reconsider his withdrawal decision. There were several major sources that opposed strongly to President Carter's withdrawal plan. First, intense resistance to the withdrawal came from the military. General John Vessey, commander of the United Nations command and the U.S. Forces in Korea, and General George Brown, the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS), disagreed

over the withdrawal on the ground that the presence of U.S. bases in Korea had been the cheapest and the most certain deterrent for 25 years. On 19 May, 1977, the *Washington Post* reported Major General John Singlaub's critique on President Carter's withdrawal decision. He was a chief of staff of the U.S. Forces in Korea and said that the U.S. troop withdrawal could invite a North Korean attack and thus lead to war. The *Washington Post* added that all the generals in South Korea opposed the withdrawal decision. President Carter fired General Singlaub, but this incident initiated the Congress's movement in opposition to the withdrawal plan. Second, the general's resistance to the withdrawal policy gained significant momentum from Congress. A series of open and secret congressional hearings asked the generals to testify against the withdrawal decision. On 21 June, 1977, Senate Republican leader Baker asked President Carter to postpone the withdrawal. On 3 May, 1978, a general assembly of Republican senators adopted a resolution demanding that President Carter rescind his decision to withdraw U.S. troops. In response to congressional opposition, on 20 July, 1978, President Carter finally sent a letter to the Senate Majority Leader Robert Byrd notifying him that the United States should implement the gradual and phased reduction in accordance with the situation. On 9 September, 1978, the U.S. ambassador to Seoul, William Gleysteen, officially announced that the United States could change the withdrawal plan. Third, Japan also opposed the U.S. troop withdrawal from South Korea, emphasizing that U.S. forces in South Korea had been linked to its security. Japanese government supported the continued presence of U.S. troops in South Korea, which was essential to stability in the Korean peninsula, which in turn, would contribute to peace and security in Northeast Asia (Sohn, Hak-Kyu, 1989: 117-119).

Additionally, the rapid buildup of Soviet military strength in East Asia and the signing of the Soviet-Vietnamese treaty of Friendship and Cooperation at the end of 1978 had a direct

impact on the U.S. decision to rescind its troop withdrawal plan and precipitated a change in the Carter administration towards the South Korean government. The revolution in Iran and the Vietnamese invasion of Cambodia were climatic events (Levin, 1983:53).

On 3 January, 1979, the announcement by the Pentagon produced further profound impact on the President Carter's withdrawal decision. New intelligence estimates indicated that North Korea was much more powerful than had been reported and the military imbalance between the South and North was much more serious than had been calculated. The new intelligence data showed that North Korea had its ground troops at between 560,000 and 600,000 men, rather than the 400,000 previously estimated, comprising over 40 combat divisions instead of the prior estimate of 29 divisions. These factors directly influenced on the shifting direction of President Carter's withdrawal decision. On 9 February, 1979, President Carter said that the United States would suspend any further troop withdrawal from South Korea until the completion of reassessment of the North Korean forces. After his visit to South Korea in June 1979, President Carter officially announced the end or, at least, the indefinite postponement of U.S. troop withdrawal (Sohn, Hak-Kyu, 1989:119).

As the United States decided to postpone its troop withdrawal, the human rights policy of the Carter administration was sacrificed in the name of security interests. Combined with his renewed security commitment, President Carter's visit to South Korea represented a diplomatic triumph for President Park. In the course of the debate over the U.S. troop withdrawal, South Korea had experienced severe democratic and human rights movement. In spite of President Park's gesture towards easing the severe restrictions on human rights in releasing dissidents, neither the political atmosphere nor the human rights situation improved appreciably.

The political turmoil started with the Y.H. Company incident, which was "a typical example of the government's neglect of workers' basic rights to subsistence in an economy organized for the privileged minority through a process of foreign-reliant and export-oriented economic growth (Sohn, Hak-Kyu, 1989:159)." The repression of the opposition party and other dissident movements during the Y.H. Company incident was followed by a series of attacks on the opposition leader Kim, Yong Sam. This situation developed through the suspension of Kim, Yong Sam from the party presidency to his expulsion from the Nation Assembly. Eventually, it turned into a riot in Pusan and Masan that ended in arson and the destruction of police cars, police stations, and newspaper offices (Sohn, Hak-Kyu, 1989:166-167).

While the social turmoil was spreading rapidly across the country, on 26 October, 1979, Kim, Chae Kyu, the director of the Korea CIA, assassinated President Park and the Yushin system ended. Prime Minister Choi, Kyu Ha was nominated as acting president soon after the assassination. On 6 November, 1979, Choi, Kyu Ha was elected president by the National Conference for Unification. However, an authoritarian political system dominated by the military did not disappear with the assassination of President Park. After President Park's death, martial law was declared throughout the country and politics became under the control of the military. On 12 December, 1979, Major General Chun, Tu Hwan took power through a coup against Martial Law Commander, General Chong, Sung Hwa. General Chun in fact played a key role in political developments since President Park's death. On March 3, 1981, Chun was inaugurated for a regular seven-year term as president (Choi, Chong-Ki, 1982:111).

On learning of President Park's assassination, the United States issued a public warning that it would react strongly, in accordance with treaty obligations, to any external attempt to exploit uncertainties arising from the internal situation in South Korea. At the same time the



United States also sent an aircraft carrier and two Airborne Warning and Control System (AWACS) planes to prevent possible aggression (Levin, 1983:53-54).

During his administration, President Carter tried to control arms flow to other countries. He ordered a comprehensive review of U.S. arms transfer policy and then established criteria for the types of arms to be sold and a ceiling on the amount of U.S. arms sales to other countries in 1977. However, NATO, Japan, Australia, and New Zealand were excluded from a set of controls to apply to all arms transfers (DISAM, 1996:23). In line with this context, the Carter administration's arms control policy fluctuated. However, this situation did not influence U.S. arms transfer to South Korea. As a means of contributing to South Korea's force-improvement program, in September 1978, the International Security Assistance Act approved \$1,167 million in aid for South Korea, including \$800 million for military equipment transfers through 1982, \$275 million in foreign military sales credits, \$2 million in grants for military training assistance, and \$90 million in stockpiles of ammunition, spare parts, and other war reserves (Lee, Chae-Jin, 1982:120). Along with the approval of this aid program, the United States provided all types of weapon system such as TOW and Sparrow missiles, F-4 and F-5 fighters, C-130 transports, armored personnel carriers, and sophisticated radar communication equipment to South Korea. Also, in 1978, the United States established a Defense Field Office to implement those programs in South Korea effectively (Levin, 1983:52).

At San Diego in 1978, Defense Secretary Brown agreed that the United States would sell 60 F-16 aircraft to South Korea with the next few years despite objections by the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency. The sale of those highly sophisticated F-16s would act against Carter's arms transfer policy, which prohibited introducing "newly-developed advanced weapons system into regional disputes" (Lee, Chae-Jin, 1982:121). Additionally, the Carter

administration reaffirmed that the United States would maintain a nuclear umbrella over South Korea, increase U.S. Air Force presence by 20 percent, and conduct joint military exercises. On 7 November, 1978 the US-South Korea Combined Forces, which was designed to coordinate a balance defense partnership between the two countries, was officially activated (Lee, Chae-Jin, 1982:121).

Thanks to the U.S. effort to help South Korea to establish its defense arms industry, by the end of 1970's, South Korea was able to manufacture all types of military equipment from combat aircraft to small arms (Yim, Yong Soon, 1982:313).

### **Reagan Era (1981- 1989)**

Both domestic and foreign affairs played a significant role in the presidential elections of 1980. At the end of Carter presidency, the United States domestically faced a series of economic problem such as high inflation and low productivity and internationally humiliated by the countries that most Americans regarded as inferior. President Carter's impotence to the Soviet Union's invasion of Afghanistan, the Soviet brigade in Cuba, and the seizure of American hostages in Teheran contributed to his defeat in that year presidential election. Ronald Reagan entered the presidency at the very time when many Americans wanted a decisive and tough leader. President Reagan believed that it was important to restore the self-confidence of the nation in the wake of humiliations at the hands of the Iranians and the Russians. He also sought to revive confidence in American institutions, especially the presidency. To counter the Soviet expansionism, he insisted that the United States should revitalize the nation's military power (Goldstein, 1993:195).

When Ronald Reagan entered the presidency, one of his first actions was to issue a new security assistance policy that superseded the arms transfer policy of the Carter Administration. Whereas President Carter emphasized arms sales restrictions, the new Reagan administration would evaluate arms sales requests primarily in terms of their net contribution to enhanced deterrence and defense. It would also consider whether the transfer would promote mutual interests in countering externally supported aggression. No mention is made of human rights considerations. Moreover, the policy shift argued that past restrictions failed because there had been little or no interest in such limitations by the Soviet Union or the majority of other arms producing nations. Therefore, the United States would not jeopardize its own security needs through a program of unilateral restraint. Whereas the Carter administration viewed arms sales as exceptional instruments of foreign policy, the Reagan administration perceived their use as an essential element of the U.S. defense posture and an indispensable component of foreign policy (DISAM, 1996:25-26).

President Reagan emphasized that security assistance was the principal means by which the United States contributed to the security and development needs of a wide range of less-favored countries. He argued that security assistance program would be vital to U.S. foreign policy and national security interests. He also believed that security assistance would be an essential complement to the U.S. defense effort and central to U.S. policy objectives and therefore directly enhance U.S. security. On 6 February, 1985, President Reagan's State of the Union Address expressed the importance of security assistance as follows:

We cannot play innocents abroad in a world that is not innocent. Nor can we be passive when freedom is under siege. Without resources, diplomacy cannot succeed. Our security assistance program help friendly governments defend themselves, and give them confidence to work for peace.... Dollar for dollar security assistance contributes as much as to global security as our own defense budget. (DISAM, 1996:26)

In the light of the security issue, Reagan administration had a great concern over the Soviet military buildup and the security threat in Asia. President Reagan's main strategic objective in Asia was to end what he considered a decade of retreat and vacillation by the United States. To "check Soviet expansionism in the region and restore American leadership," he wanted to establish "a loose grouping of friendly powers," with South Korea an important element in the plan (Han, Sung-Joo, 1983:223). President Reagan did not make any secret on the U.S. military posture in Asia, in South Korea particular. He also did not hesitate to support the South Korean force improvement. The United States began to regard the Korean peninsula not as an outpost for the defense of Japan but as an area of intrinsic strategic value (Han, Sung-Joo, 1983:223-224).

The joint statement issued at the end of President Chun's visit Washington in February 1981 assured the South Koreans that "the United States has no plan to withdraw U.S. ground combat forces from the Korean peninsula," and confirmed that it would "make available for sale to Korea appropriate weapons systems and defense industry technology necessary for enhancing Korea's capabilities to deter aggression" (Han, Sung-Joo, 1985:88). The United States also promised to resume a series of government level consultations immediately (Han, Sung-Joo, 1985:88).

As the Reagan administration started their business, while concerning the Soviet Union's military buildup in the East Asia, they began to strengthen its forces in South Korea by modernizing the equipment of U.S. forces. Between 1981 and 1982, the United States replaced the F-4s with a wing of 72 F-16s and deployed a squadron of antitank aircraft A-10s to South Korea. In 1984, the U.S. forces in South Korea received the newest surface-to-air missiles in

order to enhance the defense of airfields against low-flying aircraft. Additionally, the U.S. troops were equipped with the AH 1 Cobra, an antitank helicopter gunship, 100 Blackhawk helicopters, M-198 howitzers and a Copperhead 155mm precision-guided missile (Clough, 1987:176).

In addition to improving the capability of U.S. forces in South Korea, the US-South Korea security consultative which was held in April 1981, showed the United States' strong assistance to South Korean military modernization programs. During the meeting, Secretary of Defense Casper Weinberger strongly stated that "the United States nuclear umbrella will continue to provide additional security to the Republic of Korea" (Han, Sung-Joo, 1983:224-225). At the end of the meeting, both countries produced the strongest statement that the United States would continue its security commitment to South Korea. The United States also promised to provide "a wide range of support, including appropriate sophisticated technology, the sale of equipment, and improved Foreign Military Sales credits for the enhancement of the defense of the Republic of Korea" (Han, Sung-Joo, 1983:225).

In late 1981, the U.S. Congress approved the sale of thirty-six F-16 fighters to South Korea. By 1984 South Korea's total purchases of U.S. weapons and parts reached \$800 million per year. Such purchases included components for the F-5E fighters and the Bell helicopters coproduced in South Korea. They also included substantial numbers of TOW antitank missiles and Harpoon surface-to-surface missiles for South Korean destroyers and frigates (Clough, 1987:175).

In addition to improving the South Korean forces, the Reagan administration had a great concern over the Korean peninsula peace between the South and the North. Defense Secretary Casper Weinberger and President Reagan visited DMZ in South Korea in March 1982 and in November 1983 respectively. Both repeated that the United States would provide a strong

support to South Korea in the event of a North Korean attack (Clough, 1987:176). President Reagan was the first US president to visit the Demilitarized Zone. Since he visited South Korea, the US security commitment to South Korea had been enhanced. Joint security co-operation had increased and the United States agreed to provide more advanced military technology and equipment. However, in recognition of South Korea's growing economic strength, the United States terminated military assistance in 1984 and foreign military sales credits in 1986. The termination of military assistance and FMS credits was based on the fact that the South Korean economy was healthy and prosperous enough to permit the procurement of U.S. military articles through commercial channels (Lewis, 1988:110).

Although the South Korea continued its own efforts to defend itself from aggression independently, South Korea needed strong US support to deter or counter a North Korean attack. For this reason the United States continued to deploy its troops near the DMZ, plus air and naval forces in and around South Korea. The U.S. and South Korean forces continued to mount the annual spring "Team Spirit" combined exercise, which involved 200,000 troops and constituted the largest military exercise in the world (Detrio, 1989:18-19). In 1987, the idea was suggested that the 1988 "Team Spirit" exercise should be scaled down or cancelled in order to reduce tension on the peninsula prior to the 24th Seoul Olympic Games, which was held in September and October 1988. However, the evidence of belligerency of North Korea in the destruction of the KAL airliner off the Burmese coast in November 1987 forced the two countries to implement the joint exercise as planned in March and April 1988. The United States also made clear that it would prepare security and surveillance co-operation for the Olympics, particularly in regard to counter-terrorist operations and contingency plan (Lewis, 1988:110).

There were no arguments that the Carter administration failed to apply its human rights policy to South Korea and gain any positive consequences. This situation made it easier for President Reagan to carry out his policy differently. President Reagan took full advantage of President Carter's difficulties in dealing with the Korean question. Along with a change in President Reagan's strategic policy in Asia, the death of President Park in October 1979 and a change of administration in both the United States and South Korea had a positive impact on improving in both countries relationship. By inviting President Chun to Washington before his inauguration, President Reagan accomplished what President Carter could not secure with protest and warnings. As new U.S. ambassador to South Korea, Richard L. Walker mentioned in July 1981 that the relationship between the United States and South Korea had not been good, both countries shared the common view on the uncomfortable relationship between the two countries. However, President Reagan's such efforts to improve the relationship between the two countries contributed to make South Korea more flexible and accommodating. President Reagan assured South Korea that the United States would support and give a greater degree of self-confidence and sense of autonomy (Han, Sung-Joo, 1983:219, 222-223).

The improved relationship between the two countries made South Korea free from its previous preoccupation with bilateral issue. It also gave South Korea a chance to look at other important countries and regions, particularly in Southeast Asia. As the relationship between the two countries restored, South Korea could pay an attention to expand its diplomacy beyond the United States and Japan. South Korea was able to devise and implement a very flexible and innovative foreign policy. After taking office, President Chun took a trip to the ASEAN countries to expand the diplomacy. President Chun enjoyed greatest success at broadening South Korea's diplomatic horizon. As a result of his effort, South Korea promoted its economic

relations with those countries and expanded export of its goods. Beyond its efforts in Southeast Asia, South Korea tried to pursue its foreign relations with the Third World in competition with North Korea (Detrio, 1989:52). South Korea had pursued "internally a policy of strengthening national defense capabilities, rapid economic development, and political stability while externally pursuing a policy of regional and global recognition and cooperation" (Koo, Yongnok, 1985:77).

The Games of the 24th Olympiad were successfully concluded after a 16-day run in Seoul from September 17 to October 2, 1988. The Olympics provided South Korea an important momentum for exploring commercial relations with Eastern Europe. After his inauguration in 1988, President Roh, Tae Woo, adopted "Northern Diplomacy" as the key element of his foreign policy. South Korea had enjoyed diplomatic relations with most Western countries, but its contacts with the former socialist countries located mostly to the north of the peninsula, which were friendly with North Korea, were limited. The aim of this policy was to create an international environment conducive to the peace and stability of the Korean peninsula and to smooth the way for the eventual peaceful unification of the South and the North. The success of the Northern Diplomacy resulted in the normalization of relations with the former Soviet Union, the Eastern Europe countries, and finally China.

Along with the military issue, as East Asia became the fastest-growing and most resilient trade region in the world, the United States began to realize that East Asia would become an important region for the U.S. economy. In large measure that is the product of Japan, Korea, Taiwan, Hong Kong, and the ASEAN countries. This dramatic economic growth influenced on the United States strategic policy to East Asia. Total U.S. two-way trade with East Asia and the Pacific in 1986 was about \$265 billion. U.S. trade with those countries was greater than U.S.



trade with the European common market and almost one-third of total U.S. trade. However, the United States' trade deficit with those countries amounted to more than half of the total U.S. trade deficit (Simon, 1988:3).

In this context, the United States also began to recognize South Korea as one of the United States' largest trading partners. The South Korea's economy entered a new phase from 1986 with the onset of the three lows: low oil prices, a lower dollar, and low interest rates. For the first time in the economic history of South Korea, domestic savings began to exceed investment, and the international balance of payments turned from a chronic deficit position to a surplus. As a result, South Korea was able to rapidly to reduce its foreign debt, which had peaked at \$46.7 billion in 1985. In 1986, the annual inflation rate as measured by the consumer price index stabilized at the 2.8 percent, and the economic growth rate exceeded 12 percent in 1986, 1987 and 1988, recording the highest rate in the world. In 1988, South Korea's per capita GNP was \$4,127. The economic issue had played a great role in keeping the relationship between the United States and South Korea in the 1980s (Sakong, Il, 1993:4).

In 1980s, economic relations between the United States and South Korea had undergone drastic changes as South Korea had developed. The United States was suffering from severe deficit problems. Economic relations between the two countries entered into a new phase from 1986 as South Korea's trade balance with the United States turned positive for the first time. South Korea's total exports to the United States reached \$95.5 billion from 1984 to 1989. The United States was South Korea's largest trade partner and accounts for most of South Korea's trade balance. Since 1986 economic relations between the United States and South Korea have turned on the trade-balance issue due to those reasons (Sakong, Il, 1993:130-131).

Echoing earlier criticisms of Japan, US trade interest group and politicians requested protectionist measure against South Korea. In response to this action, the United States started to restrict Korean access to the US market and asked South Korea to open more South Korean market and to protect the international copyright and patent conventions. As a result, anti-Americanism had spread out through South Korea by the main source of tension in the bilateral relationship, namely trade issue. The Koreans were disappointed and rather aggrieved because the Korean people felt that they would not be a second Japan and they had been victimized despite being loyal allies of the United States. Despite its achievement of the dramatic economic growth, South Korea became concerned about its economic dependence on the U.S. market. Traditionally the United States had been the most important market for South Korea's exports. In 1987, the United States occupied 30 percent of total South Korean trade and 39 percent of South Korean exports (Lewis, 1988:112).

While the Reagan administration resisted some of the Congress's more protectionist demands, such as the so-called Gephardt amendments to the omnibus trade bill which was defeated in 1988, it increased its own demands for concessions from South Korea. In 1988, President Reagan announced that South Korea was removed from the list of developing countries which received preferential treatment for its exports to the United States under the Generalized System of Preferences (GSP) with effect from January (Lewis, 1988:113). In any case, one after another, sensitive trade disputes between the two countries and market-opening issue continued throughout the decade.

## **V. Conclusion**

### **Chapter Overview**

The United States and South Korea have had a close bilateral relationship for almost five decades. Despite the geographic, historical, and cultural differences between these two countries, a solid relationship has been nurtured and strengthened since 1950. For South Koreans, the continued deployment of U.S. military forces signifies the importance that the United States attaches to a free and stable Korean peninsula (Han, Sung-Joo, 1983:201). The United States has been an active participant in South Korea's postwar reconstruction, which has enabled South Korea once impoverished land to become the world's 24th largest trader and America's seventh largest trading partner.

There are a variety of indicators that demonstrate the critical role the United States has played in the survival and development of South Korea in the post-Korean war period. U.S. economic and military aid to South Korea is one dramatic example. In the twenty years that followed the signing of the Mutual Security Treaty, the United States extended to South Korea 8 percent of its worldwide foreign economic and military assistance with the exception of South Vietnam. The United States gave more aid to South Korea- a total of \$11 billion- than any other country (Han, Sung-Joo, 1983:201).

The U.S. willingness to underwrite the financial requirements of South Korea's subsistence and defense was more than matched by the receptivity of South Korean government to U.S. aid and to dependence on U.S. help in wide-ranging areas from defense to economic development. Between 1954 and 1970 the United States gave \$3.5 billion to South Korea in

economic aid alone. This was equivalent to nearly 5 percent of South Korea's total gross national product for that period (Han, Sung-Joo, 1983:201-202).

The United States and South Korea had carried on a one-sided relationship of assistance and influence. The United States had been the provider of help and South Korea the recipient. Moreover, since South Korea had been seen as one segment of its global geopolitical strategy, the United States had often made major policy decisions unilaterally, giving little thought to the serious consequences they would have for South Korea. At the same time, it had exerted considerable influence over South Korea's domestic and foreign policies (Han, Sung-Joo, 1983: 202).

However, while the fundamental security objective of maintaining a strong and credible deterrent posture had not changed, the U.S.-South Korea relationship was undergoing basic structural changes in 1980s. South Korea's foreign policy efforts focused increasingly on the need to expand its ties with China and the Soviet Union, two critical sponsors of the North Korean regime, in an effort to stabilize the Korean peninsula (Detrio, 1988:11). In this period of fluctuating and changing circumstances, South Korea confronted crucial policy decisions, which sought both to enhance its security and also to lessen its dependence on the United States for its overall security. To be sure, the United States continued to play the most important external role in South Korea's foreign affairs, but its overall influence relative to the early years of the U.S.-South Korean alliance was reduced.

## **Research Questions and Conclusions**

**Question 1.** What political, economical and military issues have influenced the execution of the United States security assistance to South Korea?

There were several facts that influence the execution of the U.S. security assistance to South Korea. First of all, when the Korean War broke out, the United States led the United Nations Forces in repelling communist aggression in 1950-1953. Since the Korean Armistice Agreement was signed in 1953, the United States had made enormous contributions toward South Korea's political, military, and economic development, and no one can refuse the magnitude and the impact of the U.S. contribution. This was followed by a massive build-up of the South Korean forces. In addition to the troops, the United States have maintained a mutual defense treaty with South Korea.

In 1966, when the Johnson administration requested the dispatch of South Korean combat troops to Vietnam, the United States agreed to provide massive security assistance to South Korea in exchange for the participation of South Korean combat troops in Vietnam. Although the South Korean participation in the Vietnam War cost lots of combat casualties, it benefited South Korea in many important aspects such as the South Korean forces combat experience, the significant economic gains, and the enhancement of the self-respect of the Korean people.

In July 1969, President Nixon announced the "Nixon Doctrine" in which he declared that the United States would not be involved militarily on the mainland of Asia, and later decided to withdraw one of the two U.S. combat divisions deployed in South Korea. This was the shocking announcement in South Korea. Consequently, the United States agreed to provide extended support for South Korea's military modernization programs following the pullout of one of the two U.S. combat divisions from South Korea.

In late 1970s when President Carter decided to withdraw all U.S. troops from South Korea, South Korea had to go through yet another test. As it turned out, many U.S. congressional and military leaders had serious misgivings about President Carter's troop

withdrawal plan. Finally, President Carter decided to postpone the withdrawal indefinitely after an initial pullout of 1978 of some 3,500 troops. During the Carter presidency, South Korea received the military assistance from the United States because the withdrawal decision was based on the assumption that the large amounts of U.S. aid had made South Korea military strong enough to defend itself. However, human rights issue in South Korea and Park, Tong-Son scandal so-called Koreagate had a negative impact on the U.S. security assistance to South Korea.

Actually, the U.S. security assistance policy on South Korea was not significantly influenced by several incidents such as the intelligence ship U.S.S Pueblo, the Blue House attack, EC-121 reconnaissance aircraft, and Panmunjom axes incident.

**Question 2.** What contribution has security assistance made to military strength and economic growth in South Korea?

During the height of the cold war, in the 1950s and 1960s, the United States provided not only a security shield but also military equipment to South Korea. U.S. troops have remained in South Korea since the Korean War. The U.S. troops presence helps to keep the Korean peninsula stable. During the three decades of the U.S.-South Korea military alliance the United States provided some nine to ten million dollars in security assistance to create, train and equip the South Korean forces. The United States provided \$1.5 billion in a military modernization program during 1971-77. In 1974-75, the United States sent \$219 million worth of military equipment to South Korea, and in 1975-76, \$509.5 million worth of military equipment, missiles, and advanced aircraft through the foreign military sales. In 1978, the U.S. Congress appropriated \$1.2 billion for South Korea as part of a military assistance program that included \$800 million in military equipment transfer. The United States sold F-4E and F-5 aircraft to South Korea in

1979 and approved the sale of 60 F-16 aircraft in FMS in the 1980s. The South Korea forces were greatly enhanced in the 1980s and could be matched with the North Korean forces.

In respect of the economy, the United States and South Korea have maintained mutually beneficial economic relations since the establishment of South Korean government in 1948. For the first decade of the South Korea's existence, this relationship was largely one of the United States providing aid to South Korea. Between 1945 and 1971, South Korea received a total of \$3.8 billion in economic aid (Chung, Un-Chan, 1983:181). This policy was pursued as part of the broader political relationship and the United States policy of containing communism. Economic reforms begun in the 1960s had transformed South Korea from a poor dependent to an increasingly important customer and competitor for the United States. As South Korea's largest trading partner, in 1987, the United States absorbed 30 percent of total South Korean trade and 39 percent of South Korean exports. South Korea is the fifth-largest trading partner of the United States.

**Question 3.** What contribution has security assistance made to strategic military balance on the Korean peninsula and regional stability in East Asia?

The United States began to recognize the strategic importance of South Korea after the Korean War. The relationship of the United States, South Korea and Japan developed as a political alliance in the 1950s and 1960s. Following the Korean War of 1950-53 the United States signed a security treaty with South Korea. This was followed by a massive build-up of the South Korean forces. After fourteen years of strain, relations between South Korea and Japan were normalized in 1965. For the past four decades the United States has played an important role in creating and maintaining the Korean peninsula and East Asia stability. The United States has been the security shield for South Korea and Japan, as well as its ASEAN trading partner.

U.S. security commitment and U.S. troops in South Korea contributed to prevent North Korea from attacking South Korea and to deter Soviet Union expansionism. In addition to those facts, American commitment to Asian security and expanding participation in Asia's growing capitalist economic system contributed to the ability of non-communist Asian countries to develop politically and grow more important as allies.

**Question 4.** What will be the future role of security assistance in United States-South Korea relations?

The end of the cold war is still bringing structural changes to security and politics in Northeast Asia. These changes are only the beginning of a wave of changes that will continue throughout the remainder of this century. The security and politics of Northeast Asia are likely to become a highly complex issue. Of course, there has been a change in the nature of the U.S.-South Korea relationship, however, this is not to mean that the continued validity of the alliance is being questioned. Considering the stability of the Korean peninsula, nothing has occurred to change the atmosphere of confrontation and tension between North and South Korea. In the post-cold war era, although there have been several remarkable developments on the Korean peninsula, the situation continues to be a major source of potential instability for the security of Northeast Asia. The extent of potential instability is difficult to determine, depending largely on the stance by North Korea.

South Korea will continue to require the U.S. security assistance such as US arms, air and naval support, and intelligence and strategic assistance. A substantial portion of South Korea's trade also will continue to be carried out with the United States, and it will remain a strategically important area in the overall US military posture in Asia and the Pacific. It goes without saying



that U.S. security to South Korea is likely to play an important role in maintaining stability on the peninsula, at least until and if Korean reunification is achieved.

## **Summary**

After World War II, the United States policymakers have viewed security assistance as an important and flexible instrument for the pursuit of U.S. foreign and defense policy objectives. Security assistance has also been used to supplement economic aid when U.S. policymakers judged that a country lacked the means to provide for its own defense. South Korea is one of the best examples that demonstrate tangible U.S. support for nations whose defense was deemed vital to U.S. security.

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### Vita

Major Myung Ryul Bae was born September 25, 1965 in Pyung Taek, Gyung Gi Do, Korea. He graduated from Pyung Taek High School in 1983 and entered the Republic of Korea (ROK) Military Academy that winter. In 1987, he was commissioned as a Second Lieutenant and received a Bachelor of Art in German. His first tour of duty was at the 3rd Field Artillery brigade, Yang Gu, Kang Won Do. There he served as an observation officer, a battery executive officer, and an operation assistance officer. After graduating from the ROK Army Artillery School for Officer Advanced Course in March of 1990, he served as a battery commander in the 68th Infantry Division and the 9th Infantry Division between March of 1990 and December of 1993. In 1994, he was assigned as a Korean liaison officer to the U.S. Eighth Army in Yong San, Seoul, Korea. In 1995, he was selected to abroad education case, and then entered the Graduate School of Logistics and Acquisition Management of the Air Force Institute of Technology in April 1996.

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REPORT DOCUMENTATION PAGE			Form Approved OMB No. 074-0188	
Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 1 hour per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of the collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden to Washington Headquarters Services, Directorate for Information Operations and Reports, 1215 Jefferson Davis Highway, Suite 1204, Arlington, VA 22202-4302, and to the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reduction Project (0704-0188), Washington, DC 20503				
1. AGENCY USE ONLY (Leave blank)	2. REPORT DATE June 1998	3. REPORT TYPE AND DATES COVERED Master's Thesis		
4. TITLE AND SUBTITLE  SECURITY ASSISTANCE TO SOUTH KOREA: ASSESSMENT OF POLITICAL, MILITARY, AND ECONOMIC ISSUES FROM 1947 TO 1989.		5. FUNDING NUMBERS		
6. AUTHOR(S) Myung Ryul Bae, ROKA				
7. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION NAMES(S) AND ADDRESS(S)  Air Force Institute of Technology 2750 P Street WPAFB OH 45433-7765		8. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER  AFIT/GCM/LAL/98J-1		
9. SPONSORING / MONITORING AGENCY NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES)		10. SPONSORING / MONITORING AGENCY REPORT NUMBER		
11. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES				
12a. DISTRIBUTION / AVAILABILITY STATEMENT  Approved for public release; distribution unlimited.		12b. DISTRIBUTION CODE		
13. ABSTRACT (Maximum 200 Words)  South Korea is one of the most important allies of the United States. Because of its location in East Asia between China, Japan, and Russia, South Korea is a strategically important partner of the United States. Since the Korean War, the United States and South Korea have tried to maintain the regional stability, and South Korea has played a significant role for the East Asian power balance between those countries. The relationship between the United States and South Korea changed through time from the Korean War to the rebuilding phase of South Korea's economy, and finally a progression towards a more independent South Korea capable of a larger portion of military self-defense. U.S. security assistance program has played a key role to the rebuilding process of South Korea. Security assistance has been used to supplement economic and military enhancement in South Korea. South Korea is one of the best examples that demonstrate intangible U.S. support for nations whose defense was deemed vital to U.S. security.				
14. SUBJECT TERMS  Arms sales, grant aid, Korean defense, security assistance.			15. NUMBER OF PAGES 90	
			16. PRICE CODE	
17. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF REPORT UNCLASSIFIED	18. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF THIS PAGE UNCLASSIFIED	19. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF ABSTRACT UNCLASSIFIED	20. LIMITATION OF ABSTRACT UL	

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